

The Young Artist

The author is neglecting Catherine and her sisters in order to recall time and events that have been neglected even longer. Catherine needs to be printed out in her newest revised version, so that she can be marked up once again. A Renaissance In Paradise, A Place Of few Regrets, and Beyond, need to be brought to a conclusion. Each of the above has serious problems with attempted illustration. Please Pass The Truth along with Fits and Starts has promise. The Log House waits in the wings. This writing is an attempt to understand, through reflection, a protracted involvement in the arts.

The author is over the hill, nearly out of sight; he is looking back, unremittingly, from habit. He clutches at things that will not sustain him over the short haul that remains. Salt in the air. Out of his element. Working on a Perkins 4-108 in his spare time.

Most likely he will exit before Catherine and Renaissance/Regrets are satisfactorily completed. Where one might excise, there are many fond replacements that can be included. Renaissance does not fulfill its promise because the planet has suffered too much the ravages of the selfish, careless, reeking pestilence. One cannot guide the work past the incriminating evidence. Please Pass The Truth is a repository of cynicism that cannot be thwarted or dissuaded. It's the damned incontrovertible truth; no glossing. The proposed Log House is another true story. Hoping to get the 4-108 running.

Should there be some mandatory requirement that authors be responsible, held accountable for what they write? Readers are the other half of the equation.

John Gardner, like everyone else, amateur or professional, venturing an opinion upon the subject, writes of the 'young robber'. One guesses the assumption is, that eventually the young robber will become an old robber with finally something to steal (coherently, and with art and finesse). It is possible however that Mr. Gardner in overlooking something, in repeating this often cited misconstrual of reality. The optimum case is unknown, without a clue in the firmament. It is true, we are what we are, at any given moment, young or old, fulsome with our conceits.

Given that, and beyond, self-consciously, the author has wondered concerning the person; first, second or third, or an innocuously named fourth. He realizes that I, that is, I, becomes distastefully repetitive, and more than likely tiresome, since we

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soon realize who the I is. If one removes himself thus from the first to the second to write 'you', one might tire of you, and in third, he or she, the disguise also becomes evident. The fourth, in place of anyone of the others, for all that, may drive one to boredom for its resemblance to the others, unless, of course, one's fourth is Stavrogin. Of course!?, why, 'of course'; or should it read, off course, not relevant, not pertaining to the subject at hand. Stavrogin is one of the more original characters, an ear biter, a wife chaser (even one's friend's), a mad free spirit, and willing, by inference, to indulge in wild chances beyond the confines of law and mores; unconventional, in the extreme, a rapist, beyond all conscience, and a complicit murderer. Not mad, mind you, just himself. How much of Fyodor was in him? Fyodor avoided suicide. How much of ingenious (or should that read ingenuous?) Cormac lives in the villain of *No Country For Old Men*?

Mr. Gardner advises avoiding the influence of TV and Movie characters as substitutes for real life characters. Stavrogin may be an extreme, more extreme than one self, if that self is original, and not a Movie/TV composite. However extreme it is on paper, it cannot be as extreme as what one might imagine. Regardless of the person one may use, if it is original, it ought pass muster, whether one is a young or old robber, extreme or not. There are few real life Stavrogins; the author knew of one who seemed a 'loose cannon', as well as a deliberate provoker. He shot the anchor man during his evening delivery of horrendous events using his 357 magnum aimed at the TV. Caput! He poured his orange juice over the newspaper his mother was reading at the breakfast table, attempting to get her attention. He man-handled his wife unnecessarily, hurting her without cause, raising anguished cries; he bounced the author's five year old sons' head on the concrete through unnecessary rough play; he deliberately coaxed his dog to trample underfoot a newly raked bed for a proposed lawn. He was loud and enjoyed provoking through implied threats and posturing. He called himself 'friend', but behaved like a scoundrel.

To continue with relevant matters. Another influence one ought to avoid is that of the Best Robbers List. The desire to join the ranks may lead one away from the one legitimate character he or she knows best.

John advises keeping it simple, and not overly descriptive, but poignantly descriptive, none the less. Every wart need not be named, only the prominent ones that add distinctive delineation to character. As someone who has done 'creative' things, in other of the arts, one might compare this to drawing, where sometimes

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only the suggestion of a form is all that is necessary. It is opined that Marcel Proust is a 'great writer', but his microscopic detail does not hold the author's interest. (Maybe too many warts.)

Further, John opines one should not be influenced by the great robbers like Dickens or Melville, although robbing in their style represents a training challenge (like training wheels on a bicycle). As doubtlessly others have observed, Gardner does wisely note the language of any age, may, or will seem stilted as time goes on. Don't try to rob a modern novel with Dickensese, or with Chausereese, as did Mr. Gardner. If 'fuck' is the only word that exists contemporaneously as a truer expression of man and civilization, and the yearnings of the great mass of humanity, so be it. The author exaggerates. Bite your ear. The music of Dimitri Fuckoff plays to the angel falling from the Tower of Babel.

Perhaps it is a case of one proposing, while it is the other who must do the disposing.

Like Kurt Vonnegut: So it goes.

As it goes, the points are somewhat moot. Google has erected a challenge to copyright law by claiming 'fair use' in its methodical raiding of libraries to erect its Universal Library. This wholesale gathering is bettered by Amazon, Kindling everything in print, and that will be in print. Apple in your I, wants to rake it in over the Kindle, with Microsoft trying to get a piece of the action. Not only are the 'young artists' faced with this predation, the source of sponsorship is drying up for 'old artists'. It's a new world, with new rules. The 'old publishers' are being rendered into anachronisms; in order to attempt to survive they are resorting to selling their services directly to the 'potential author'. Along with 'fair use', there is 'free content'. Soon the chimps and chickens will be turned loose on computers to produce random masterpieces wherein copyright will become the property of faceless corporations like Arianna Huffington, not too differently than Monsanto patenting the seed we need to grow the food we eat. Only the eaters and the readers can bring a halt to this predation.

Despite these developments, creative people will persist, on their own, by selling their products, for whatever they can get, over the internet, like the farmer with his farmer's market. How they will be able to elude Google, or the Yahoos, remains to be seen.

So, the author is only marginally picking on Mr. Gardner for this common fault. There are other windbags who blow that we are washed up intellectually after forty; Mr. Osler (Sir William, to you) Bt. (*Bacillus Thurengensis*), MD (mendacious deceptions)

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FRS (fucking rat shit) honorary profferer of mendacity at Hopping Johns, and an outrageous profferer of mendacity at Fordox; to name one. This profferer of mendacity claims oncet u hit farty, its over.

That's two strikes against this old geezur. Do it like Dylan Thomas, drink yourself to death at thorty-nine. Our songbird jotted her best poetry, then gassed herself at thorty (whereas her old man lived to be a wasted sixty-eight, playing with hisself [his known batting average: three offspring, one offed by its mother {not the songbird's}. The songbird's children are over farty now, the female still trying to tell it like her mother [she aint gonna make it, right, Sore William?]) There's something irritating about the meandaciously pedantic, or is it the pedantically meandacious. If your author was under farty instead of 2 x farty, maybe he could fathom the difference. The point is pointedly, stupidly (pedantically), mean. Geezuzz Forking Keerice, life begins at farty. Can it really be over at 2 x farty?

How would John Gardner describe that old windbag? Eric Blair (Orwell, to you) would admonish 'no foreign words'; tell it like it is. Aequitanimitas (a misrepresentation anyway). One doesn't see how that is relevant to blowhard. Eric may have been correct in his **assessment**. Is the reader confused by this rant? Just so you know, there are people out there who do nothing but make judgments about others.

Credit due where credit is due. Getting old ain't no fun, and is often sorely tiring. Its a matter of available energy. Even with boundless energy, there isn't any guarantee that one isn't going to fuck up. Failures are the mark of man. In the medical field, there are those who finish at the bottom of the heap of practitioners, regardless of age. If Sore William finished at the top of his class, just think what is in store for the rest of humanity, if we use him as a measure. General Custer finished last in his class at West Point; yet he did a remarkable, or is it, a memorable thing. If the author reads Mr. Osler (Doc, to you) correctly, he is suggesting all doctors cease doctoring at farty, regardless of where they finished in their class, for fear of harming the patient. Any non - Hippocratic doc worth his salt would have fleshed out his portfolio by the time he reached farty, so that he could easily become a Premie (premature old fart). The White Cloak. Or, is it better stated, 'Cloaked In White'? A case of dubious humanity? Caught in its own attestations.

The foregoing is mostly irrelevant to the main theme; however instructional it is intended to be (this writing is intended to be entertaining as well as informative). Wvhen he was a jung mahn, he had fallen under the spell of his self-acclaimed great father,

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who said you aint nuttin unless youz an artist. Like Mr Osler, (and Mr. Gardner), he mixed in a bunch of other gobbledygook that may have pertained to what an artist was in the first place. Father bluntly stated that 'art and wimmen don't mix'. He often told his son his brains were located in his pee pee. Father was concerned, after reading Frederick Nietzsche, that the seminal stuff drained the brain. So Fred dies of Syphilis (or was it Phyllis) and dad became a phil(anderer); maybe that is why he failed to make it big, as big as all those forbears. 'Angela' (Lois) loved him for who/what he was. Regina claimed she was afraid. Winnie poohed. Jackson Pollock knew her, but wouldn't, unless she put a sack over her head. Frank Sinatra said she was too fat. This reads like the Purple Land where W. H. liaised with every lass he met.

Following in the aforementioned footsteps loses a lot of its meaning in a hurry, but it took him (our protagonist) until he had nearly exhausted all his capital (aging), before he could step out of the shit into the sunlight. He had dropped sculpting, which was a self-conscious part-time activity, a token involvement to assuage the taunts from the figure that hovered above him. He terminated this activity just as he was about to turn farty. It was a woman who engineered this transformation, by simply loving him, whether or not he was an artist; one of the wonders and mysteries of life. Sound familiar?

So here he is at this double farty place in his life, trying to recall the former life, before farty, trying to see if it has any meaning that is relevant to what he is now, and whether he can draw upon those enlightened nostalgic days to fill and perhaps enliven his catabolizing hours. He has contacted his high school room overseer from whom he obtained yearbooks, has talked to two high school classmates, and written a third. He has contacted Sonja, has contacted Peter Fagan, has written to John Gaitanakis. Somewhere in all this looking back he resurrected his early involvement in the visual arts; this, after reading John Gardner 'On Becoming a Novelist', which was suggested by Raymond Carver; and so it goes, (thanks Kurt, send me the bill).



Looking back at the arty stuff might not have occurred if Gardner had not put such emphasis on the young robber. The author happens to be an old scribbler aspiring to become a robber.

In his teens the author carved a cigarette lighter, (not a Zippo, but oval, with a raised rim on the top and bottom; an open affair where all the working parts were exposed), rather than

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one of his sexier school mates. It seemed to suggest, temporarily, to his father, that his son could see detail and proportion rather well, however unaesthetically; trompe-d'oeil that, if you will.

Later, after leaving the trappings of a rural high school, and disappearing into the military, he was not emancipated from the curse of the father. The father felt it his duty to remind him what a moron he was. The indulgent father mailed a deck of cards to his son while he was stationed in Keflavic. He probably misread this gesture of friendship, but, as a less than friendly gesture, he mailed to his father a paint-by-the-numbers kit.

That wasn't the end of it; somehow daddy took it in the right spirit, that his son thought he was a crock, which really wasn't true; but since his son seemed to have the upper hand in the argumentation, he did not disabuse his old man of the thought.

After leaving the military, he cooled his heels in Oregon reading O'Neill, Ibsen, Strindberg, Wedekind, Cervantes, Dostoyevsky, Lewis, Lardner, Hemmingway, and some biographies, before he decided to go to the BIG city accompanied by, and accompanying, some real Bohemian artist (painter) friends. While in the BIG city, he found his way into the Brooklyn Museum Art School as a student in sculpture and life drawing, while holding down a full-time job. Meanwhile his Bohemian art friends, intimidated by the Big Scene, availed themselves of Traveler's Aid for a return passage to Oregon (the author may have more to write regarding these ones later, already mentioned in Catherine).

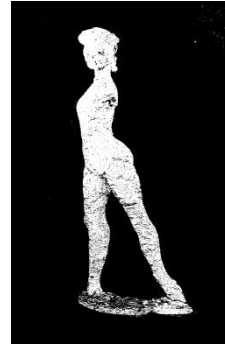
At the Museum Art School, enrolled in Hugo Robus', (rarely seen) (great sounding name for the arts [however seemingly more effete than robust]) sculpting class. His very first creative effort was something like the cigarette lighter, only it was a human hand (is there any other kind) modeled in plaster. One of the other art students, an older gent, paid him an inverted compliment by saying it looked like a Balantine beer ad (like Bill Murray with Suntory in Lost In Translation). He went on to do other things, like modeling real females from life, standing there in front of him, and like the cigarette lighter, with all of their parts exposed. This went on until he decided to leave the BIG city, following, and precipitated by, an unrequited love 'affair' with a fellow drawing (painting) student, who really suckered him with her beautiful smile and sweet talk. (Wish he had a pitcher of that one).



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In the meantime, having returned to Oregon, living and working in a small greenhouse, he had tried his observational skills on some portraits, and started crudely carving in wood, and crudely making some plaster, and plasticine figurines. Gotta start somewhere. He surely had BIG ideas too. With the help of some female University students, one of his BIG ideas, a tall plaster eight footer, looking fearfully over his shoulder, (scared shitless that the bomb was on its way; [remember those days, the days of megatonning in the atmosphere, and fallout shelters]) barely held together with a rickety armature and a sopping of burlap in plaster, (look!, no hands), was moved to a square outside of one of the girls dorms. Holy Shit, when the University Officials got one look at that monstrosity, it lost its tenure in a flash (don't excoriate 'em in the least). He was at an age when he was intimidated by the opposite sex, having already experienced one devastating rejection. There was one of the girls with whom he might have renewed his concept of failure in love, another sweetie, Sue Corally (sic.) {that's her in front, with the arteest behind her}. She offered no particular encouragement, perhaps realizing he was not the one, at all. She was about to graduate and move on to bigger things with her twenties page boy hairdo. If he had followed pop's example, he might have asked her to pose for him. There was another girl, enormously buxom, who might have, if he had shown any interest.



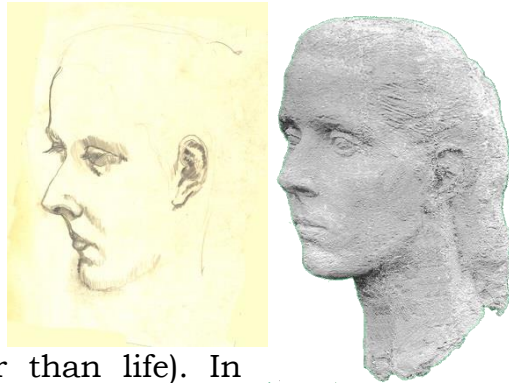
One of things the young artist noticed about enormously buxom lasses, impressive though the outward signs, and the associated clefts one is occasionally permitted to view (Sarah Palin (rather hypocritically) objects to this kind of viewing), when relieved of support and revealed in the full light of day, or in the studio, as were the life models in art school, the buxomness suddenly becomes rather pendulous, or somehow disproportionate to the remainder. That may be more than a subjective judgment. In observing the modeling of Greek (or Egyptian) statuary, it seems that buxomness (in Palin sight) is equipped with a different musculature, that defies gravity. Idealized, no doubt. He was inclined toward the idealized stuff. Small shapely is better than big gross (un)shapely. Since he



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never had the privilege of sampling the big, he did not know what difference there might be in the aesthetic versus tactile reality. Venus de Milo looks rather chunky by today's standards, but with upright mammaries. Art abhors reality. Naw! Enhances. Speaking of reality in all its grimness; he knew of a lady who was endowed with what she had esteemed, oversized 'breasts' (as they are commonly referred). She engaged the services of a surgeon (was he over forty?) who rendered her smaller, but before she could revel with her new body, she died of complications (blood clot). A very true story, however gruesome.

To continue with relevant matters; during this time, he executed his first serious attempt at portraiture, Betty. Using plasticine modeling clay to be cast in plaster, the essential Betty came to life



(larger than life). In hindsight, though a rough surface, a fair job; better than the cigarette lighter. After Betty, a series of portraits of girls and young women, a self-portrait followed. Only one of these survived (Elaine) survived in the

form of a plaster casting (with a much more refined surface than Betty, shellacked as well; whereabouts unknown). The best effort was Julie, also cast in plaster, but poorly so, with old plaster, that did not set properly. As he was about to photograph this effort, setting on the fender of his car, it slithered to the ground, rendering it,

sadly. He was very fond of the sixteen year old; a very sensitive portrait, revealing his feelings for her. On the other hand, his portrait of Valerie seemed utterly fictitious, like the personality it attempted to portray. He attempted a portrait of Marylyn derived from photographs (not a very satisfactory way to execute a portrait).

These efforts were followed by a 'grand' experiment. He had been employed in a welding shop where he became more familiar with metals, his interest centering on copper. However, he

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disliked the notion of brazing copper (sheet) because it created disturbing lines of a different color on the surface of any work.



Instead, he elaborately curled up the edges, at a 90 degree angle, each joint to be tightly fitted, the proximity of edges needing to be



rather close fitting because the idea was to fuse the two edges, melting them down with an oxyacetylene torch, to a more or less flat surface. Very tedious; raw copper does not flow; often resulting in melted holes at the site of the weld. The large torso (larger than life) proved a challenge using this method, one he never used again because it was not possible to control the metal the way he intended. Furthermore, any welding lines not conforming to the anatomy still proved disturbing to the eye. That was his thinking upon the subject at that time.



Moving on, later, once again in the East, in the little State (Lakeville), next to the Big State, he modeled a very detailed portrait of a hefty 69 year old Mme. VanRosenHoogendyke; not a masterpiece, but a disciplined, accomplished, effort (eventual fate unknown).



Following such travail, he flew off with Henry Fonda and Richard Widmark, on a TWA Constellation, to an even BIGGER state, to the HH Foundation in the Santa Monica Mountains, to work on the copper Dutch (while Hank and Dick were carousing Sunset Boulevard). As Gardner intimated about trying to rob in another man's vernacular, as representing good training, the arteest, under the influence of August, banged out a welded (brazed

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copper) contorted figure (another eight footer, [the bigger they are the harder they fall] struggling anatomically to resemble a human. It was a sustained effort for six months. Abruptly, as fate did have it, his time was used up at HH. The work was abandoned on the grounds until the Foundation was offered as collateral when Huntington needed to settle some of his debts (wimmen). Eventually the artist returned to retrieve Dutch, severing its extended arm to make it possible for the thing to fit into his 1950 DeSoto limo (back seat removed, back partition to the trunk removed). Now it is in the artist's possession, arm replaced, variously abused by neighbor's boys brick throwing, located in his shop, out of harm's way. Its copper value at present might make it worth stealing, at 2.75/lb. The 1950 DeSoto is buried nearby in blackberries, ivy and laurel, a concern for neighbors and underwriters (definitely a different kind of robber). De Soto's body might be worth something as the car that did it, carrying off the body to its final resting place. Kool-Aid, folks.



(Below, for the greater enlightenment of the viewer, was the arteest in his early arteestic days.) There is little evidence of the



tendency to elaborately distort the language through free association, and the use of outrageous punstoring. However, as you can read, there is an attempt to be off-hand, jocular, facetious, etc. when the actual character feels, and felt, many other things, and not very frivolous concerning his struggle with the muses and the curses. (Trivializing is what happens after farty.)

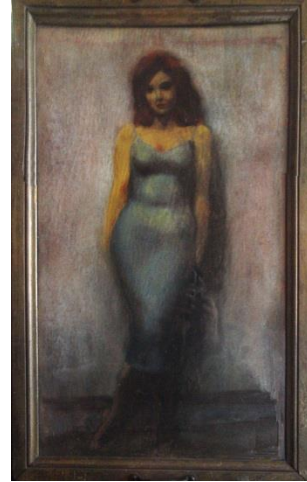
Subsequently, the artist was encouraged, by a psychiatrist friend of his father's, to try his hand at robbing; he did so, realizing that he had nothing to steal. Well, everybody has

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something to steal, whether they make the Best Robber list or not. Judging by the number of libraries, bookstalls, etc. (jails?), there are a lot of people with a something to steal; at least, that might become the assumption. (eh Google?)

Our budding prospect tried a stint at pastels on newsprint, only one 'calendar art' example having survived (a fire, mentioned later on). While the existing example is not particularly colorful, pastel chalk is sometimes very colorful; he used that feature to portray Spanish dancers in their colorful dresses.

Reminding the reader, the arteest is still living in the mini-greenhouse with his dog, Duke, who had the propensity to chew his bones during the night; a very grating sound that earned Duke the rebuke of his master. Duke liked his comforts. He greeted all with equanimity; not a mean bone in his body. He both wandered and travelled much, looking much like a cross between a beagle and a spaniel.



A few psychiatrists later, the game played on. Metal sculpture, wood carving, a few portraits (getting better). The worst portrait should have become the best, but it was the biggest flop; the adage about art and wimmen revealed all its awful

truth. The artist really liked this woman, Merriam, a very lovely, married, with children, Jewess, from Vassar (Poughkeepsie). The artist and the woman talked at length about literature, notably Nikos Kazantzakis. This was a commissioned work, by her husband, in exchange for building materials. Geezzz, what a flop, the artist went gaa gaa, and even though he knew he was heading for disaster, would not change course. A change in course would have entailed knocking the thing to the floor, starting over again. Perhaps time played against him; perhaps it was like the Science Professor from England said (what is it about these British Snubs) who ventured that the arteest might not be good enough. Anyway, it was a flop, the 'thing' actually was cast in bronze, as he was privileged to see, 20 years later. It was propped awry on the back deck of their

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home, a horrible reminder of the ‘weather gone bad’ in bronze. At the sight of it, the arteest should have become temperamentally impermanently deranged, with a BIG sledgehammer. The evil lives after him. So you will know, when you get around to doing portraiture, don’t get distracted by your subject, and when you are distracted and get in an uptight spot (like overworking the surface [stay loose]), don’t be afraid to knock the thing to the floor and start over. Nothing is sacred. After the twenty years, Merriam seemed to have changed; so maybe it was her fault, because she was, at the time of the portrait attempt, unformed.

Alas, while at HH, he met a young woman painter, who became his partner, followed by family responsibilities, and what to do about art, in whatever form? The muse, or the kick in the ass from the old man, who hypocritically declaimed against art and women, and who said you aint nuttin unless’n yore an arteest, surfaced through it all (you guessed it, dad couldn’t resist making a pass at her) (Dad had informed his partner [confidentially] that he (pateras) had fucked his unrequited lady love in the Big City) {The author realizes this is irrelevant, (offensive) to the serious reader, but it is intended to show that anyone, no matter how big an asshole, can still be involved in the arts).

The art thing, with muses and curses, continued to haunt and plague the author, the robbing thing, the most painful for its obvious lacks, the sculpting showing some promise, but always after work, and on weekends, which meant neglecting the family. Well, what can you say; they suffered along with the arteest, regretfully. This formative time of the arteest lasted some ten years, oscillating between words, wood chips, sparks, a job, a partner, and two children, building onto the house and shop, neighborhood politics [a real time-consumer], so on and so forth. Other arteests do this more glamorously. According to dad, suffering is the lot of the arteest.

Meanwhile, his father, the self-acclaimed genius, was receiving some recognition from a gallery (Graham) in the BIG city, through the intervention of a gorgeous redhead riding on the back of a Vespa, who solicitously visited the gallery, photos in hand. Through the gallery, his work was selling (he received 60% of the proceeds). However, he was squandering whatever talent, or good fortune, he had, chasing the skirt. After all, what are you supposed to do when you make it; yeah, follow your inclinations. Mother couldn’t take it any longer; she departed, never to return. When ya gotta go, ya gotta go; that’s how RR got out of press conferences (as his marbles began rolling all over the place) (Mother had all her marbles, without astrological references). RR

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and mother were tough on crime. Dad got himself cut off by the gallery when he started selling privately to Neiman Marcus. It was tempting to forego the 60% for 100%, at a negotiated price.

Not to abandon the sculpting thing prematurely. Yes, it was abandoned eventually, a story in itself. But before the beginning of the story in itself, the end of the other. But before the end of the other, the adventure that befell, before the end.

Perhaps the most satisfying part of the sculpting was the wood carving, his last efforts before things started to go awry. As things were going awry he was doing portraits of his family, and a commission modeling the psychiatrist's wife, in exchange for Quaaludes. He was also working on Vietnam.



(All portraiture is larger than life size.)

The story of sculpting, in one's spare time, follows.

Brief Aside (at least one imagines it will be brief), purportedly leading somewhere.

To continue, he tells of deceased John, from the island (from where this writing (robbing) is receiving its baptism), who, when starting the fire in the old kitchen stove, would of a sudden pause to read something in an old New York Times Sunday edition, a few pages of which he would be using to kindle things along. The arteest too has fallen into the same venue a number of times, not even with such a renowned rag as the Times. Gott, fresh outta the sack, one is easily sidetracked. From the Business Section, John would read aloud how McDonald's made 70 cents on the dollar with French Fries, and 30 cents on a burger.

From John he also learned that Häagen-Daz was a pure invention (gimmick).

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For our arteest, getting the fire started in the parlor Schrader involved a similar technique to John's kitchen stove; kindle it first, then add the longer lasting stuff.

The kindle consisted of a page from the Globe and Mail, the front sheet of which caught his eye because it was ranting about the Alpha female, of all rags, the New York Times. He didn't set her ablaze this time (saved, to be read later), but, in adding to the kindle which consisted of one sheet of the G and M, he used an empty Nabisco Premium (is there any other kind) Saltine box, that formerly contained four sheaves of unsalted cracker tops.

When he picked this up to use for the fire starter, he wasn't thinking saltines, but he did need to consider how to rend the box into usable tinder. Using the box whole, wrecks the whole edifice. Anyway, it got rent. While it was being torn asunder, he thought of his early days, seventeen, just out of high school, being sent off to live with his two maiden aunts in West Lynn. He's not sure who promoted that scheme of things, but he was glad to get away from You Know Who. The aunts were his mother's sisters.

He wasn't sent to Lynn to just sit around, and lead the life of a indolent wastrel. He was expected to find a job. He didn't do any looking, but one of his uncles, married to another of his mother's sisters, set him up with a job in the factory where he had worked for years, the Hogue Sprague shoe box factory (another kind of box, to be sure [ah-ha! the connection]), located in Saugus.

A factory in every respect; a noisy, deafening place, with all kinds of machinery being used to manufacture shoe boxes of all sizes and shapes. The section of the factory where he was expected to labor was an area housing a half dozen machines that produced, in machine gun fashion, boxes that were eventually intended to house shoes in shoe stores. His machine made covers, in the flat.

Imagine, if you will, six machines, with four feet between them, firing away, while trying to concentrate on what was coming out of them, and doing with them what you were supposed to do with them. Communicating by voice was out of the question, and discriminate hearing through ones ears was out of the question. No OSHA, so no mandatory ear protection.

Let's retreat a little here. These machines were about 30 feet long, about 4 feet wide, and about 7 feet high (huge machine guns). On the far end they contained rolls of the kind of cardboard used in shoe boxes, and rolls of facing paper. These rolls would be fed into a works consisting of feed rollers, a glue pot, trimmers, creasers, slot makers, paper folders, and sundry feed mechanisms, squeezing the pieces together (the cardboard

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and the facing paper with a glue between them), spewing them out onto a shelf, waist high, at the other end of the machine, where he stood.

They called him a stacker. As the spewing roared at some 100 units per minute, it was his task to grasp, or manipulate (collate) the flat units into stackable bundles, and place them on a palette setting on the floor behind him. This went on all day, every work day, interrupted by lunch time, and the occasional break-down of the machine. Gott, that's a lotta shoes for a lotta people. Walking the walk.

The machine was operated by an operator, whose task it was to get it going, and keep it going, and fix it when it screwed up. Some imperfection in the paper roll might cause a problem, but usually it was glue accumulation on the rollers that caused the majority of problems. The timing on the operation was such that at least a day's production should be obtained without interruption. The after hours work crews would thoroughly clean and lubricate the machines to be in readiness for the next day's production.

Now comes the interesting part. There was no doubt in his mind that the operator of the machine was related to Alan Ladd. He looked like Alan, same height and build, same straight blond hair, same confidence, similar motion, same cigarette, same reserved manner. Shane with a New England accent.



More interesting yet. His uncle, Sharkey, who worked in another part of factory, printing the names of Tom McAnn (sic), Sears Roebuck, Montgomery Ward, Buster Brown, sundry, along with 'My Dog Ty Lives In A Shoe', quite reassuringly told him that he did not belong in that place; his uncle believed better things were in store for him. You're reading the result of that opinion.

Perhaps, but at the time, he suffered along, earning his keep, smitten by his Godmother, aunt Madeline, a sweet, pretty, curly long dark-haired spinster, who wore sleazy (touchy feely, to him) polka-dotted dresses, who made chopped liver, and egg, sandwiches for his lunch, and spoke with a New England accent (please pass the peppuh). As much as he had swooned to the charms of Madeline, he would not attend St Mary's Catholic Church down the street on Sunday. The whole of the neighborhood must have been comprised of a nest of Catholics; all his mother's family were Catholics (what remained of her 11 siblings) plus offspring. It was supposedly a mutually reinforcing notion that he should accompany his younger carrot-topped cousin, who lived around the corner, to attend the Sunday fare in the holy place. His aunt did not suggest or insist that he go with

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her and her sister Mollie, the other spinster dragon aunt, who would probably have pulled him there by the ears. Anyway, his Cousin, Charlie Ellard, and he, conspired, to avoid the Word by sneaking off to the Newspaper/Magazine store around the corner, or whatever opportuned itself. Charlie's mother, Anna, an aunt through marriage, insisted that her son get some of the Word, but made no effort to check up on him.

Meanwhile, back at the factory, day after day of incessant racket with Alan Ladd and the large motherly lady stacker located at the machine next to his. They communicated with shouts.

He hung on at Hogue Sprague for six months, seeing his uncle once or twice while there, with nothing to say, as he recalls. During his tenure with his aunts, Mollie suffered a terrible stroke, for which he somehow felt responsible, because he was testy with her tendency to be bossy. Anyway, she was paralyzed on one whole side of her body, requiring a lot of attention, with little inclination to be bossy (imagine a New England accent with a lisp and mumbles). She had only lately retired from GE, located in the next block, after some forty years, to be rewarded by the Lord with this awful cruel and usual punishment. He had taken from her the ability to serenade Him on the keyboard.

The author felt he needed to get out of there, so he left sweet Madeline for the environs of his old man and his mother and brother, back in Deep Hollow. What happened after that? Maybe later? OK, now, because the author realizes the suspense is killing the reader. Hence, the anecdotes continue.

While at Deep Hollow (actually they lived on the hillside, not in the Hollow) he found another means of employment working the night shift in another cardboard factory in that old Indian Village, Wassaic. The large concrete structure had formerly housed the non-Indian Borden milk processing plant. He worked there until the management learned that he was not eighteen. The factory manufactured thick (1/2 inch) cross sections of laminated cardboard, immersed in molten sulfur. These products were used for the shipment of aircraft parts. He operated a cutoff saw to create defined lengths of U-shaped sections, before they were production-lined into the vat of sulfur. At the end of every shift, it was his task to remove the, gummed-up with glues, saw blade, thoroughly clean it with steam, outside the building, at three o'clock in the morning; a strangely pleasing sensation, with the heat of the steam, in the frozen night air.

After being released from the workplace, he was under daddy's eye once again, a very uncomfortable place to be. He found a series of odd jobs to earn his proverbial keep.

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Things between daddy and his spouse must have become uncomfortable as well, because mother and son were suddenly in the 1937 Oldsmobile sedan in early June, driving across the whole of US of A, following a southern route through Appalachia into Tennessee, then west, across Arkansas, Oklahoma, then into more elegant sightseeing in New Mexico, Arizona, winding through Colorado, Nevada, onward to Oregon. Besides some of the sightseeing at Mesa Verde, the Grand Canyon, Hoover Dam, he recalls slithering all over Oklahoma in the red mud, after a night rain, while camping in the bush; the freezing morning in June in Silverton, Colorado, on the million dollar highway; also going to a movie in Silverton with his mother, concerned about her passing as his girl friend; suffering from altitude sickness in Wolf Pass, also in Colorado; travelling through the desert in Nevada (in late June) where it was 120 degrees in the shade, having to speed up and slow down at intervals to keep the Oldsmobile from boiling over; and the number of tire blowouts in the heat of the southwest. Finally Oregon, where the father had spent some time on a wild goose chase (he was promised some mural work by a museum curator friend from Connecticut who had a temporary appointment at the U of Oregon). No mural commissions were forthcoming, but he had made some gardening connections, one of which his mother pursued for a temporary stopping place while she found employment. As a practical nurse during the polio epidemic, she found immediate employment in the local hospital. While her son found immediate employment fighting forest fires, followed by a series of jobs as a night-shift dishwasher, Western Electric trainee, and Standard Oil trainee, before being located by his New York draft board through registered letters. He knew the jig was up; he enlisted in the USN during the Korean debacle.

The Beats, like Jack Kerouac, and the Hippies, like Ken Kesey, got famous doing this itinerant 'on the road' stuff, like maybe, they invented the wheel, with proprietary claims. Sorry to mock the iconic ones, no Neal Cassidy, but, as an impertinent youth, this now over-farty old soldier hit the road several times between 1951 (17) and 1959 (26), once with his mother, once with his Bohemian friends, once with his architect friend and dog, Duke, once with his partner, once through old Mexico by himself, besides other solo trips, and military junkets, along with two aeroplane rides. These were not trips to the grocery store, but mostly complete traverses, without getting drunk, without pot,

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LSD, psilocybin, 'speed', peyote, or Kool-Aid, or wild abandon; just that ancient urge to escape one thing into another, so-called adventure, without seeing the inside of a motel, or a bus. He made three of the trips in three different Pontiacs, a 50, a 51 and a 52, one in a 1941 Chevy coupe (with $\frac{3}{4}$ cams), the 37 Oldsmobile and the 52 Nash Greenbrier. He slept in each of them while on the road. The 51 Pontiac was traded in for a 49 Ford, the 50 Pontiac was abandoned in Toronto, the 52 Pontiac was repossessed, the Chevy coupe was traded in on the Greenbrier, the Oldsmobile was bought by a wrecking yard (after it threw a rod doing 85), the Greenbrier, and 52 Pontiac were repossessed. During his sculpting years, the author drove a 55 Volkswagen, a 51 Ford and a 67 Saab; the 50 DeSoto was decommissioned after his sculpting career, replaced by a 65 Dodge Dart. The 52 Pontiac got the medal for the longest day; 900 miles from Joplin, Missouri almost to Salt Lake City, descending the Rockies at night, with all the windows open, freezing outside.

An American Odyssey. Ok, for now, patient reader?

Although contributing even more to the disjointedness of the script, this may be the place for the author to insert the truth of things. It has been intimated that the fadder, pateras, had informed the son that he, the son, was, not only most likely a moron, but truly one. The only way to avoid that stigma was to become an arteest. This isn't written anywhere; it comes down through the ages, passed on from generation to generation, through the aegis of aural history.

The son was not cut out to become any such thing (how is it possible for a moron to become an arteest?). If what we do in this life is based on free choice, his choice would have been baseball, even though he might have been the lousiest ball player. There is such a thing as being the lousiest arteest too. The father's condemnatory expletives heaped on the opposite sex, as the corruptors of arteests, did not find favor with the author. He liked, and was drawn to the female sex. For this, his father opined, supported by Nietzsche, his brains were located in his pee-pee. When you really think about it; so what!? Dad was not nice. When the author was fifteen or sixteen with a mop of curly red hair, dad decided the mop needed some adjustment, so he cut a swath through it. The author is still not sure what was accomplished by this seemingly barbaric deed.

Somehow, dad thought the son would get the message, For the son, it was a helluva place to be. Cut off at the pass. Deprived of playmates, who fadder labeled the village idiots; confined to Deep Hollow in irons, forced to listen to the claptrap about art,

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(and wimmen); and no baseball or girls, (he imagines a sister would have improved his lot; but upon further consideration he realizes pop would have fucked her over).

Perhaps this seems one-sided, that is, a declaim against the self-acclaimed genius. While some of this is true (hatred surfaces where you most expect it), there is something for everybody. While this may not be true in a concentration camp, it was true living in the Berkshires, at least a mile away from the nearest neighbor.

Objectively speaking, the Creator did a pretty good job with the Berkshires. There was the abandoned farm nearby with its overgrown orchard and pastures; there was the surrounding forest of maple, oak, hemlock, and dead chestnut, with laurel underfoot; there was the Indian creek down below, murmuring when all else was still, there were the phoebes singing feebeee, feebeee, outside his window, while setting and wagging on the concord grape vine. The open fields on the hillside behind the house grew tall grasses where one could invisibly lay, while staring up at the skies full of billowing clouds; the fragrant grass stirring in light breezes. And in the winter, though horribly cold, there was the sublime muffle of the entrenching white, with ice patterns on all the windows. Yes!, a remarkable tranquility; something for everyone. Even for dad, who missed a lot of it, with his demonic muse (ego, one thinks) hounding him.

Later in time, dad would paint a picture of a child dancing on his fadder's coffin. Guilt; and he would utter, from time to time, in viewing his son's growth, and strength, and sensing his seething something or other, "Society frowns on parricide".

Something for everybody? Equal and opposite reaction; was that Newton? Nearly every Sunday, it was dad's task to select a chicken (New Jersey Giants and Cornish) for slaughter. This could be a very traumatic event for his children who had made pets of some of the birds. Dad was unsparing. But the rainy day came while dad was pursuing and latching onto a bird, when he unceremoniously slipped in the muddy hillside turf, subsequently flying through space, losing his catch, to land discombobulated on his posterior, much to the glee of the sons watching the murderer get his. Unfortunately for the youngsters, their mirth did not go unnoticed, for which they were angrily berated (Honor thy father and thy mother [sounds almost Biblical]) and severely punished (spare the rod and spoil the child). This may sound funny now, but let the author assure the reader that retribution is sometimes not worth the pleasure.

Not a very propitious environment for the arts!?

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Dad wanted to be understood (and loved and adulated) by his family, but he got little of it. While it might be clear that the pateras could wield a mean brush with Grumbacher and Windsor Newton, it did not generate the kind of admiration dad required (better obtained through the ogling opposites [bared for action]).

What was a child to do; feeling like shit because dad did not (could not?) let up in his condemnations? The easiest and safest way was to do what the old man wanted, but how? The children would hear all about the boy up the snotty end of Deep Hollow, who could draw and carve like the young Michelangelo, while his dipshit sons could do little more than play with themselves. This is to be construed as inspiration. Well, that snotty kid up the road fared no better than the dipshits, as the water rolled over the dam (Some would say, 'That's life!' [Aint it the truth]). That snotty kid up Deep Hollow graduated Princeton, married a dream girl, then his life went to ratshit, all by its inherently flawed self. Too much snot; not enough substance (grit). Johnny Slater, Wonder Boy; shirt-tail beneficiary of DuPont. What's in a DuPont? Better luck next time, Johnny. Feel comforted, the dipshits are still trying to make asses (arteests) out of themselves; one with the notes on the staff, the other with runes on foolscap. How blind they are to their shortcomings. The grandiose manic waves his arms in wide ellipses. He claims he was sent to earth to relieve the masses of their suffering through the whims of the Man-eating Monster.



The foregoing aside began with a cardboard box. The arteest will return expeditiously to the sculpting stuff.

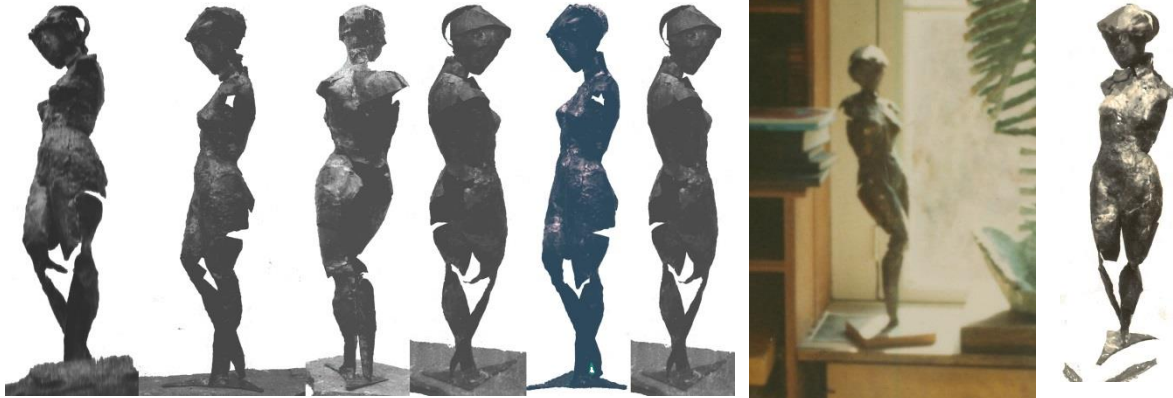
Around the time he had been laboring on the fused joint torso, he had already persuaded himself there had to be a better (easier) way to continue with metal sculpting. While he was aware of the Saul Baizerman technique, he could not afford the large heavy pieces of copper required for such an endeavor. He was aware of the Julio Gonzalez method of assembly which was more akin to the way he wanted to produce a work, that is, to begin by concentrating on modeling some part of the anatomy, working from



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there to create a whole.

He experimented with less well engineered pieces of metal, brazing them together. He was not ready for taking on something as large as Gonzalez' Montserrat. Unlike previous endeavors, he began more modestly with small female figure (if you do not recognize, what you see), approximately 20 inches tall, employing



a three dimensional collage method (this work no longer exists, destroyed in the fire that destroyed his father's house-studio). It was done in brazed copper, hammer-shaped in most of the vital places (as you can see (Oh! Say you can see) she lived a full life).

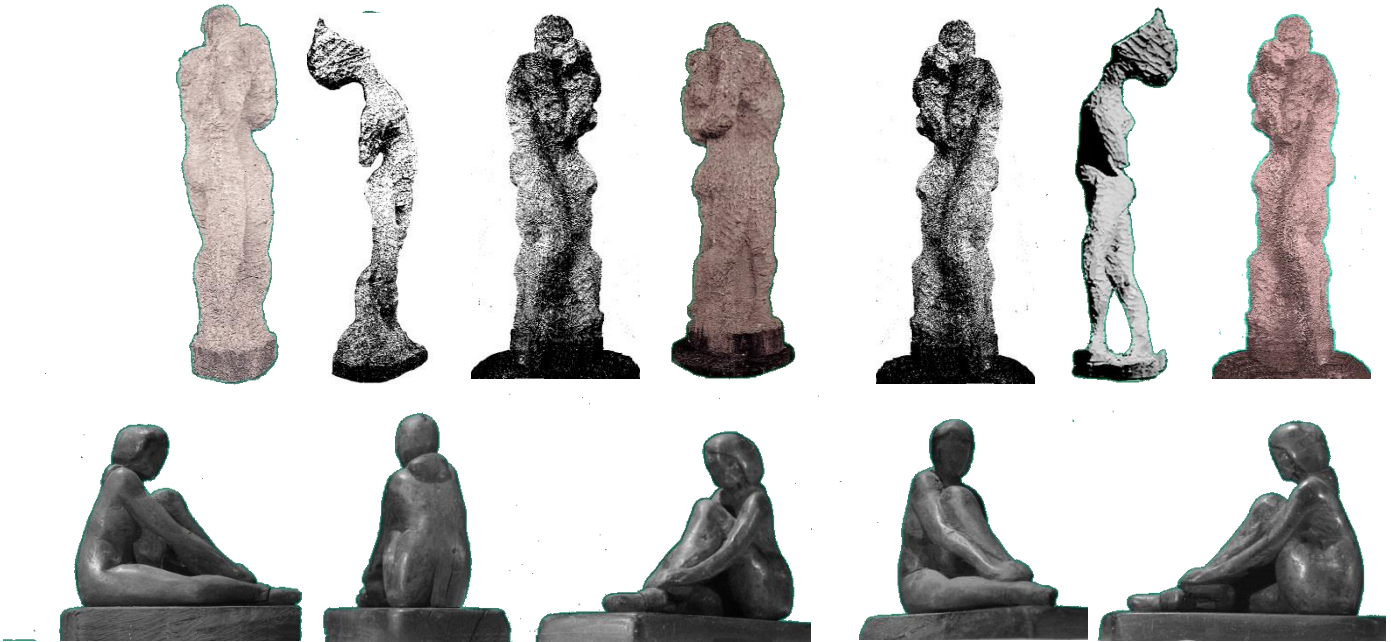
This trial was followed by the Lakeville and Vassar portraits (in the neighboring respective little and big states), followed by the monstrosity (Dutch) at the HH foundation, which was also a hammered (32



oz.) copper and brazed construction. Chronology plays a part in all of this. He made a few hammered copper reliefs, one, the best of which, was stolen after his own fire, which destroyed most of his and his partner's possessions at the time. The devilishly quickie aspen experimental wood sculptures, 40 inches tall, 'went up in smoke' in the fire, and one small birch or maple wood carving (about seven inches high) fell out a window, enduring only minor scorching). Other things were perhaps mercifully incinerated, thus avoiding

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any further embarrassment. The loss of the pastels and certain writings left an ache.



If it had not been through the accident of birth of a certain fireman, much more might have been saved from this conflagration; it would not be necessary for the author to be recalling things from a dimming memory. The fire occurred at 2:30 AM; that is, it was ablaze at 2:30 AM New Years morning. After a call was made to the local fire department, and getting out of the building with 6 month old, and an arm-full of clothing, a pumper arrived on the slope below the building, the side where the fire was raging. The pumper wasted no time extinguishing the blaze, when suddenly the water was gone. A second fire truck had arrived on the uphill side of the building, and was already in the process of connecting its pumps to a hydrant, when the electric service line to the building shorted, breaking apart, landing with its hot wires resting upon the truck. The truck was now theoretically 'live'; as a consequence, the firemen were not allowed to touch the truck until the power company arrived to disconnect the service. The asshole fireman who parked the truck under the service wires, may he roast in the huge conflagration, where all sinners ketch it. The fire reignited, without anything to discourage it, finishing the job it had started. A power company crew arrived much too late to get much use out of the disabled fire truck.

It has been said, ignorance sometimes leads to bliss (or agony), which characterizes the following. This fire was the type common in the older days of brick chimneys, built without flue liners, used with wood fired stoves. 'Creosote' is purported to

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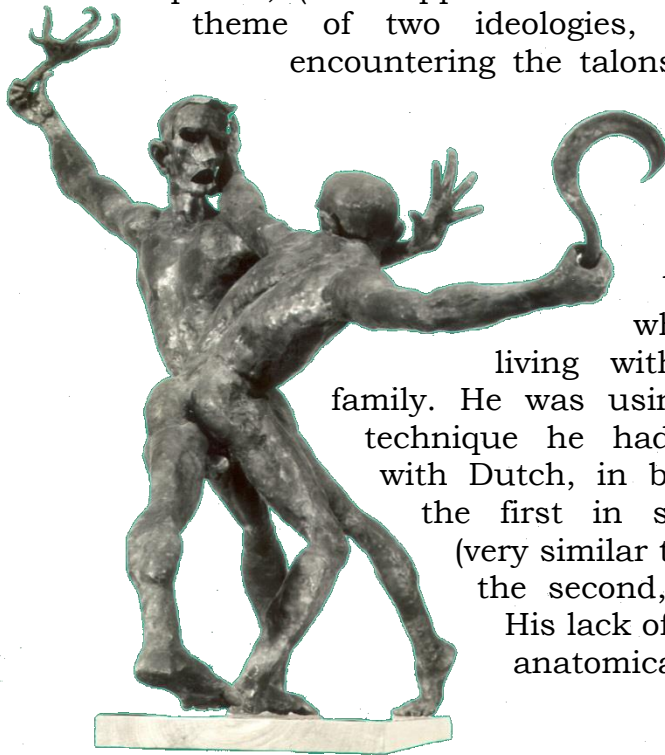
condense from the cooling smoke of incomplete burning of the wood, rising inside the flue, lining the inside of the brick chimney, with its deposit. Occasionally, in an individual flue, and frequently in flues where wood burning is the source of heat, notably in the Northwestern part of the US of A (but not only there), a hotter than usual fire will ignite the 'creosote', causing a very hot fire in the chimney. The heat of the fire heats the brick, which eventually travels through it, with a fierce amount of scorching heat. If the outside of the brick chimney happens to be touching anything flammable, for example, very dry wood, it can kindle the dry wood. In this case the very dry wood was saturated with kerosene leaking from an oil furnace in an upstairs meeting hall. If one follows routine procedure of cleaning (at least once a year, depending on the amount of use) the inside of these chimneys, his chances of avoiding a hot fire in the flue are greatly improved. A flue liner is even better protection from the ravages of such chimney fires. A lesson in pyrotechnics. Oddly, the same fire department that had attempted to still the rages of Prometheus had recommended igniting these suspect flues with a piece of newspaper, or waste foolscap, to better control the timing of an eventuality. One wonders. His neighbor took after one such rage with his garden hose, injecting water into the flue from his rooftop, only to blacken the interior of his living room with the ensuing flood. The fire department advised him, next time, to let it burn. The author had used the technique upon three occasions, allowing the flues to blast out their jets of fire and heat; a most frightening experience wherein the initial phase is a roiling cloud of white smoke, followed by blacker stuff, suddenly accompanied by a roaring sound followed by the escaping wrath of Hades.

After the pateras' fire, the fadder blamed his mother, who had abandoned him, and her self-appointed duty as chimney sweep. He also complained of having to relinquish her share of the insurance money, the premium for which she had continued to pay during her permanent absence. If it was not for the asides, this would be a dull world indeed. The author, now infinitely past his prime, contemplates upon the world of so-called creative activity. He can never know how, or why, anyone decides to enter into the trappings of this kind of life. For him there was no choice. The auguries of fate pointed him in a certain direction that was never to desert him for the full tenure of his existence upon this one planet. The author thus marvels at those who pursue a career in the arts, simply out of some desire or inspiration springing from within. To them, it contains the

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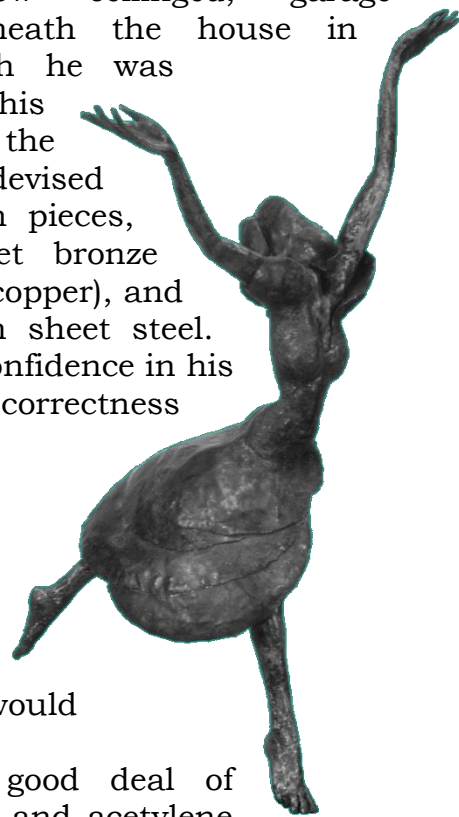
possibility of a source of joy and wonder for their entire lives; whereas his life became one of servitude to a curse. Were there rewards? Undeniably, but seemingly short lived.

During his ten year period of trying to do it all, he continued with the metal sculpting, the most ambitious being two pieces, (each approx. 4 feet tall), one depicting the old theme of two ideologies, the hammer and sickle encountering the talons of the eagle, the other, a dancer in steel.



Each of these works was accomplished in a dingy, sloping, concrete floored, low ceilinged, garage beneath the house in which he was

living with his family. He was using the technique he had devised with Dutch, in both pieces, the first in sheet bronze (very similar to copper), and the second, in sheet steel. His lack of confidence in his anatomical correctness



became the most frustrating obstacle. But he persisted, for there was little else to do, short of abandoning the pursuit, which, at the time, the fates would not allow.

The dancer in steel required a good deal of persistence, and many tanks of oxygen and acetylene. Sheet steel does not yield to the persuasions of the hammer as



does sheet bronze. A simple annealing of the bronze will allow a good deal of hammering before it becomes necessary to reanneal, whereas the steel must be hammered while it is glowing red. The steel cannot endure a lot of shaping before it begins to fracture or tear, whereas the bronze can be hammered

into a near paper thinness before it becomes rent. In preparation

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for the steel piece he made a one foot, smaller work, a dress (well, sort of), welded together with nickel-silver brazing rod. However, the dancer was welded steel throughout.

The author hopes the reader can appreciate the details without losing interest in the author's attempts to avoid the cynicism that is natural to him. He feels he has drunk a bitter draught, but cannot honestly say what else he might have done with his life if he had been freer to travel down another road. It must be understood that he harbors a lasting hatred for his father, and being so reviled, he realizes his own children must feel nearly the same toward him, not so much through over-indulgence, but through neglect. A bitter brew indeed.

The artistic endeavors continue.

Requiring more space and a better location for his need to be more isolated from human commotion (intense city life where the average lot size was 6000 square feet), he and his partner decided to move to another place (34,000 sq. ft., as the crow flies), contracting to buy. His first task after the acquisition, was to install a sewer line, then build a workplace, first, for himself, then, for his partner.

In his new workplace, basically, he had no excuses. Lots of room, at first, anyway; reasonable lighting; away from the maddening crowd (sort of). It became the final resting place for his sculptural efforts, and the beginnings of his trials with the word.

But there were impediments. Bad vibes between he and his partner. He needed a lot of time to himself to tackle his demons. She needed a lot of time to herself to tackle her demons. Between them were two toddlers upon whom she spent a good deal of her time, as mother, nursemaid, cook, launderer, and mentor. His input was contested by the children, the contesting encouraged by the mother. His demons were not to be trifled with; he spent more and more of his spare time in his 'studio'. This was resented by his partner who wanted help with the children, and who wanted someone to talk to after her long days.

Not a happy situation which began to break down into intense noisy squabbles that would create a very non-tranquil atmosphere that would linger in the studio.

Peace and good feelings were rare enough. One's intelligence would tell him things should be one way, especially between people with some apparent sense in their heads. In the human contingent, intelligence is a weak arbiter amongst the emotions. They failed; everyone bore the fractiousness, the children acting out their parent's predicament with Barbie Dolls, who suffered

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with stoic diligence the wrenching anatomical twists, and the brutal dialogue.

It would be misleading to say there were not good times, however short lived. The hikes in the Cascades were an opportunity for everyone to feel good about something, the children and the dog included. However, the parents pushed on, while the children struggled along with their shorter legs.

Did the artistic endeavors suffer because of the charged atmosphere? Who can tell? A life lived is a life lived. Considering all those who cannot live a decent life for many different reasons, we were the spoiled ones, unaware that we were squandering what someone else might assess as a great opportunity.

Peaches and ice cream are the reward in the far above.

This is not about who was wrong, who was right. It may be about leading an artist's life in the most predictably ordinary of circumstances.

It was during this partnership that the majority of either individual's efforts in the visual arts were achieved.

There were not only the differences and idiosyncrasies of two individuals living in close proximity, but also the strains of the human condition which insinuate themselves into every man or woman's life. The atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons (MAD), the saber rattling (and brinkmanship), and finally, the prolonged gross stupidity of Vietnam, were defining moments in every one's life; certainly in theirs.

Part of one's artistic endeavors involve the moral or sociological outlook, despite the criticisms that suggest one should not prostitute his art with the message. Art is meant to be a refined thing apart from the human condition. It is meant to inspire and transport the viewer or listener, reader, into other than mundane realms. Think again.

It seems impossible to separate the two. Perhaps the aesthetic is, in some way, harmed by the message, often brutal, because brutality gains the upper hand in our lives. Vietnam was brutal. Megatonning was brutal. Iraq was brutal. Most assuredly, we have not learned, even through art [contrast the saccharine depictions of the crucifixion with that of Mathias Grunewald).

People, the individuals, did not (and ever do not) matter in the struggle for influence and control. It is enough that life, through genetic anomalies and vicissitudes, leaves us misshapen, sickly, with tendencies; or that fate besets life with calamities like fire, flood, hurricane, earthquake. To have to endure the vagaries of man-made horrors seems antithetic to all we profess to know of life, that knowing persuading us to choose something more conducive to the tranquil existence; theoretically, the tranquil

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existence being more conducive to life itself. Pie in the sky! The Tower of Babbble! Sigmund Freud, the great psychoballelist, said it well, in *Civilization And Its Discontents*.

Some of what the author is trying to say may involve the 'fatefully inevitable', but there was nothing apparent about what he must do next.



If it all seems wrong, perhaps it was.

He worked with all the mediums except bronze casting. He used plaster directly, and as a casting medium. He used earthen clay that he obtained from a nearby brick making factory. He used sheet steel, sheet copper, sheet bronze. He used a variety of woods: aspen, black walnut, bass wood, arbutus, cherry, pear, myrtle, maple, yew. Black walnut, pear, cherry, myrtle and arbutus, he obtained from a local gunstock blank maker. Aspen from local trees, bass wood from dunnage, some cherry from downed trees, yew from his own property, some myrtle from a coastal bowl maker, maple from a local planning mill. Energy from Wheaties.

Plasticine (Bill Gates underlines this word in **Red**, suggesting plasticize) was the all-purpose modeling clay, a yucky, pliable, synthetic, innocuously pukey green substance. Later, he used a Mobile Oil Company wax product used in the food processing industry. The plasticine and the wax were sold in bricks, the plasticine looking like two pounds of green butter, and the wax like a yellow cake baked in a long Pyrex baking dish.

When the artist was young and single, departing the Big City, after the unrequited love affair, he managed to carry off, in the back of his 1952 Nash Greenbrier, 150 pounds of plasticine in a heap, along with his other belongings, including a Martin guitar.



The Greenbrier suffered a dent in the Big City when a truck backed out of an alley

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into the diminutive automobile, leaving a crumbled right fender. That was just the first of several indignities she suffered. She also transported his lady-love (the unrequited one) when she had absconded with a sweater she had secreted underneath the sweater she wore into Macy's. Lucky a store attendant didn't see the label dangling from underneath her attire. Anyway, the Greenbrier served as a get-away car (she did ask, 'What did I think of her now?') Sitting next to him, her aura smothered all sensibility in the matter). (In the best of all possible worlds, she married, like Cunegunde, grew large as her mother; in her advanced years, doing her Christian thing, playing the piano for the mentally deficient in a nursing home.)

His wagon transported him through Appalachia, once again, into the Great Smokies in Georgia, to Mobile, along the Gulf, through New Orleans, Galveston, to the Mexico border crossing at Laredo. At the border, the Mexican customs/immigration people only inquired how much money he had, which they insisted he show. Then they suggested where he might exchange it for Pesos (12 to the dollar). It wasn't until he was stopped at the Federales outpost some 25 miles south of Laredo that his vehicle and its contents were inspected. The officers were dressed in their uniforms, looking rather circumspect. When it came to inspecting the lump of plasticine, he, not speaking Spanish, and they, not speaking English, it required arm waving and gestures not readily available in sign language. The most persuasive gesture involved the attempt to delineate a female figure (human). Once the officers touched the mass of clay, it was clear they did not want to dig through the yucky stuff in search of contraband, avoiding the oils that might stain their uniforms and smear their brass buttons.

The author spent one month in Mexico, travelling down the east through Monterrey, Victoria, Mante, Valles, up through the mountains into Mexico City. He slept alongside the road, near villages, and was awakened in the morning by the quiescent sound of animals and people walking the roadway; also by the smells of corn, or maize, being cooked in the form of tortillas. The villages were simple; nothing ostentatious about them, the Coca Cola signs, the only visible sign of entry into the 20th century. He stayed at the Hotel Polanco in Mexico City for one week (mostly to avoid Montezuma's revenge). He visited, and was greatly impressed by, the beautiful University located on spacious grounds on the southern edge of the Big City. In one city, Ciudad Victoria, he spent the night in a motel, listening to the sounds of celebratory night music, and gaiety, as he fell into slumber. It was in Victoria, where some youngsters spied the guitar in his

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wagon, requesting sweetly and adamantly that he play something for them. They did not understand that he was really only a plinker, like so manner others with exaggerated wishes (like his Czech friend on the island, opined of another, 'It would sound a lot better if he knew how to play the thing'). Anyway, he did plink away at some Latin sounding theme, that left his audience less than enthused. That experience should have served as some kind of lesson. The troubadour did not hear, "That's Swell!", in any language.

The author began his trek northward toward Chihuahua, and Durango. He was beginning to notice the engine in the Nash was not firing consistently; he attributed this to the lower octane (75) Pemex fuel, as well as the higher elevation. Also he realized very succinctly that his fuel consumption had gone up markedly, when the vehicle ran out of fuel 15 miles south of Durango. He had calculated he would have a hundred miles to spare beyond that city.

There he was, proverbially, and realistically, out in the middle of nowhere. One small consolation, it was early December. However, there was literally no traffic. The first vehicle coming from the south stopped. Neither one of the two, the driver of the stopped vehicle, or, the driver of the stranded one, were capable of conversing in the other's tongue. Many gestures followed, one suggesting a tube for siphoning, which yielded no fruit, whereupon the driver of the stopped vehicle pointed to his watch, describing what seemed to be some time frame when he would be returning. It seemed he was showing 20 minutes. He departed; and after 2 hours it was clear he would not be returning any time soon. Another vehicle, a pick-up with many riders, came along, stopping to lend a hand. The driver offered to tow. After five miles he suddenly stopped. A piece of hose that could be used as a siphon appeared, perhaps as an afterthought. Some fuel was transferred from the one to the other. The driver of the pick-up would not accept any payment for the gas or the towing, perhaps glad to finally get on his way.

After the fill-up in Durango, once again headed north toward the border, along comes a vehicle from the opposite direction, none other than the first vehicle that had stopped, south of Durango, almost four hours later, it then occurred to the author, that the gesturing toward the watch could be interpreted to be 20 minutes, or four hours. One needs to exercise discretion (often things are lost in translation).

With the engine sounding less inclined to do its job, clearing the border at Juarez/El Paso into higher octane country, did not improve its performance. However the author was prepared to

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limp along with his sputter-mobile. He entertained his macabre sense by stopping at Death Valley near Furnace Creek where he spent the night at 265 feet below sea level. He limped through Nevada into Oregon to come to rest outside his brother's quarters, parking on the street in front of Tommy Williams, Florist.

The Greenbrier wagon suffered along with each of the indignities it was obliged to bear. Unused, it sat abandoned until the author decided to remove the head from the block. With a flathead engine that used nuts screwed to bolts embedded in the block, it became a day of swearing as the author pried the head upward, wiggling this way and that, until the head finally cleared the bolts. Then he could see that the valves were burned and needed grinding, at least; if not, replacement. He wasn't up to the task. Still recovering from his rejection by Sonja, the smiling art student, he further abandoned the vehicle to what was to become its fate. One day, in returning to his brother's quarters, he noticed the wagon had disappeared to never be seen again; it had been repossessed. One leaves a trail behind him. While in the Big City, working at Sperry Rand, located on Long Island, he took out a loan from the Company, which, when, he left for faraway places, was till owing. Those good people wrote to the author's parents regarding the loan. He learned from his mother only the good things they had to say about her son; she did not say whether she paid off the loan. The repossession did not involve the company, but the automobile dealer. Two wrongs didn't make a right; despite that, life went on in faraway places.

It is hoped the reader has kept the faith, while enduring the foregoing, that the author would eventually return to his task.

The time frame of the artistic endeavors began in the mid-fifties with Brooklyn, ending in the early seventies in his 'shop/studio', in Oregon. The author, and his arting partner, were together from 1959 to 1970, the time period when the author had accomplished the bulk of his 'sculptings'; not discounting his earlier efforts.

He accumulated another lump of plasticine (the previous lump abandoned in portraits [fate unknown]), along with some local water-based brick making clay, to conduct the plastic part of his plastic arts; and was soon to learn of the Mobile food adhesive.

Plasticine is limited in several ways; it requires an armature (support), it is not permanent, it has a dingy color, and does not photograph well. However it is very responsive to every squeeze, and push, and shove. It can be shaved with sharp tools. It is relatively easy from which to obtain a casting mold. Light pieces

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of sheet metal cut into small pieces can easily be inserted into the clay to form the necessary barriers in devising a separable negative mold from plaster (reinforced if necessary with burlap). If one has used much detail in the clay, especially in doing portraiture, it is preserved in the mold, and the clay easily frees itself from the hardened mold. The greater difficulty comes in freeing the final casting of plaster from plaster, separated by a barrier of 'green soap'. The two, the cast, and the mould, form a lump, the outside of which (the mould) usually needs to be carefully chipped away. That's the 'old' way. Casting craftsmen are using latex, as a liner, inside the mold, but it is this author's personal feeling, there is more room for error doing it this 'newer' way. The 'old' way, while tedious, preserves finer detail. But the 'old' way means you get only one copy. A clever craftsman with the newer way can get more than one copy, sacrificing some detail in the process. That is this author's opinion. The important consideration in all of this is the process of preserving something in a more permanent medium, the bad along with the good.

Working directly in plaster is problematic since the working time of the plaster is so short (minutes). It is not a subtle molding material; it needs to be piled on then shaped through removal using chisels and abrasive files. In general it requires an armature. Again, it is semi-permanent medium. It has also a blah sickly white pallor, (like unpainted gyp-rock walls).

Waxes also require an armature, unless being used as a 'lost wax' medium. Beeswax is too expensive for anything but small work, a wax that silver casters (jewelers) use in the 'lost-wax' method of casting. For larger work, the Mobile wax will serve. However, it requires softening in hot water. It becomes pliable and workable within a certain temperature range, and tolerable range of heat that the fingers can endure. It can be carved with sharp tools; it can also be smoothed by carefully using the oxy-acetylene torch, waving a light carburizing flame swiftly over the surface. The material is light colored and somewhat luminescent after torching. It has a similar advantage to plaster in that it is semi-permanent. The arteest has not tried making castings from the wax. However, it is one way to make a study rather quickly, and can be worked into some detail, but not as finely as plasticine.

Water-based clays require an armature, as does the plasticine, especially when any extensions are to be formed. Water based clay requires a lot of attention because it dries out, and cracks drastically, if it is supported by an armature. Again, it is a quick medium for executing studies, but mostly unsatisfactory as a permanent medium. If one attempts to 'fire' water based clays for

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detailed sculptural purposes, slumping and other distortions usually occur.

The shortcomings of these materials, while quick and easy to use, are mostly overcome by working directly in a more permanent medium. Metal, wood, and stone; not to discount bronze casting, or casting in more permanent materials, cast stone, or other more exotic materials, for example.

Working directly in sheet metal, one maintains a certain contact with the material at all times while working it; that is, there is no intermediary, and the work itself is constantly being worked toward a finished product directly.

Wood carving enjoys a similar set of conditions. The author has not worked with stone, but imagines that stone and wood share a similar process; quite obviously, removal of material, that is, permanent removal, whereas sheet metal involves both adding and removing.

The tactile sense of wood has an added feature if one is carving wood that preserves the cutting tools' edges. It might be said to be sensual if one is only carving, rather than sanding, scraping, or otherwise shaping the finished product. Stone is a lot less subtle, but marbles, and soft stones, do preserve the chisel's, or file's marks, if that is what one desires.



One of the last pieces, of the arteest's, attempted to portray Vietnam in the shape of a female figure that was struggling to recover from being raped (a rather simple-minded concept). This effort was larger than life size, requiring an armature. It was



constructed using plaster and cement mixed, attached to wire mesh and burlap. More to tell of this later.

The author realizes he may be confusing and frustrating the reader by jumping around too much in time, with the juggling of events, adding of tales and philosophies, and anecdotes; along with his progress as an 'arteest'.

To refresh then, and repeat in a somewhat chronological order the more significant events in the artistic efforts:

Assorted assigned manual labor, ranging from wood chopping to use of draw knife in shaping table legs.

Carving the cigarette lighter, 1948.

Some formal training in sculpture and drawing at the Brooklyn Museum Art School in 1955-56

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The greenhouse period in Oregon 1957-58 Plaster stuff, (plaster giant looking over his shoulder) aspen wood carvings, portrait of Betty, other portraits in clay (Elaine, cast in plaster). First efforts with metal (torso, primary example). Pastels.

The Little State/Big State period 1958, Van Portrait, Portrait of Meriam. Plus fashioning, from plasticine, a positive to be cast as a commissioned potters work station with a hole in the middle for a shaft for the potter's wheel._

Earlier in 1958, from Oregon, the author had answered an ad in the Saturday Review Of Literature, seeking, preferably a writer (robber), as a live-in caretaker at a property in Chappaqua, NY. Two months later, while he was in the Big State, he received a reply. While in Oregon he had also applied for a fellowship to the HH Foundation, after being rejected by the AA in Rome, and Art In America New Talent (not new, and no talent).

The reply indicated an interest on the part of the individual with the Chappaqua property, suggesting a meeting in NYC at the Harvard Club (a note about the Club; admission for the luncheon required a tie, necessitating borrowing a bow from a waiter). Having been accepted at the HH Foundation, the offer that came forth as result of the NYC meeting was both timely and untimely, for a variety of reasons. At the time the author/budding arteest was directing his energies toward sculpture. Chappaqua would not have been ideally suited for sculpting. The individual, Edward Aswell, was an editor at Harper and Row, a champion, and editor of Thomas Wolfe (facts about which the author was unaware at the time). They did not talk too particularly regarding writing (robbing), but looking back, Mr. Aswell must have realized that he was dealing with an ignoramus of sorts. Since Chappaqua seemed out of the question, Mr. Aswell proposed an education at Harvard. Holy Shit! what a bomb, and what a confidence builder.

Too much all at once. The author didn't think to ask if he could do HH first, then do something with Mr. Aswell. Most of what he knows regarding Mr. Aswell came later when he was reading a biography of Thomas Wolfe. By that time. Aswell was, sadly, pushing up daisies. When he was reading the Bio. of Wolfe, he had already abandoned the visual arts for scribbling (robbing), and was seeking some editorial assistance. HAH!!!

Anyway, to continue:

Huntington Hartford Foundation 1958-59, Dutch.

After a wintry three month sojourn to Monhegan Island (Maine) with paramour, where he was hired by one drunk to fill 'pot-holes' with clam shells; where he aided another drunk (the first drunks brother) in his open dory to pull his lobster pots by holdin' her into the wind, on the coldest day he ever experienced.

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It is also where he emptied the honey-pot into the wind; where he was awed by the tumultuous Atlantic heaving its mighty waters against White Head, and where he saw the aged disenthralled Ray Phillips of Manana in his most snot-bearded array.

He returned to Oregon (bypassing the old man in NY).

Oregon 1959-1970.

Oregon 1970 – soon to be over farty.

1970 onward; the word seems to matter.

1981 onward; the word gets more attention.

1989 onward; building in Canada, including Log House.

To Present: Writing still seems to matter. Sculpting is the great unknown. Added one wood carving; replacing stolen one??

Wax studies.

To spare the reader, the author will continue then, with a more chronological order, interspersed with anecdotes that occur. An effort will be made to be instructive with the continued inclusion of photographic material; coining the ancient phrase ‘a picture is worth a thousand’.

The arteest continued to work with sheet bronze and sheet copper (early sixties). Limited time tended to influence size and methodology. Interspersed with the metal work would be studies in plasticine, some cast; studies in water-based clay; and a larger-than-life female figure in plaster, of which the torso and the head remain.



In metal, he constructed female figures approx. 20 inches high, two clothed dancers, and one nude. The dancers were mostly free-form without much attention paid to detailed anatomy, and the nude, while paying more attention to anatomy, became an overworked piece with a great deal of brazing, in the end not achieving what might have been intended.

When working in three dimensions, the difficulty comes with resolving composition in a 360 degree circle. Often one cannot resolve all the lines that are suitable in one view while being anatomically impossible in another. It is rare that any three dimensional work will be a complete success in this regard, particularly if there are extensions such as arms and legs. If one keeps his work compact, his chances are bettered.

Metal lends itself to extensions, whereas wood, by the very nature of the material, limits this prospect. However, regarding the latter, the artist knew of one sculptor by the name of Peter Fagan, who would glue pieces of wood together in order to be able

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to carve extensions in wood, similar to Leonard Baskin; it was a matter of aligning the grain for strength, and ease of carving.

Most references in this accounting deal with ‘representational’ art, as opposed to ‘abstract’ art. Some would say, ‘realistic’, as opposed to unrecognizable.

The great pontificator, Herbert Read (another Englishman), opined that most modern art arose through sheer intimidation. Any artist starting out today, in any field, must contend with the achievements of others in the past. In a desire to be original and unique, one is more or less compromised into something obscure and unrecognizable, in an attempt to create a new art, or a new dimension to an old art. Additionally, he (the Englishman) opined that trying to express today, (NOW) using old forms, does not cut it (more or less echoed by John Gardner’s opinion that writing like Melville and Dickens will not wash in today’s world [market].)

People (arteests pretending to be artists), do not seem intimidated in the least. Perhaps the ‘pioneers’ in abstraction helped free the rest of mankind from the constraints of discipline, and hard work. This age has certainly produced a proliferation of ‘things’ for speculators and collectors, what Shaw (Theodore) identified as ‘precious rubbish’.

To me, Jackson Pollock, symbolizes the epitome of this kind of achievement; carried to its extreme, others created canvases randomly by pinning balloons of wet pigment to a surface, and shooting the bags with a 22 (or shotgun, dart, spear, spear gun, trusty blade, trusty rusty blade, rabbits foot, bear claw). Shit happens!; literally; cast dog turds, celebrating an everyday occurrence in the big city (imagine, in the old days, the celebration of horse shit in the streets of every town).

A little peyote, some loud music (thumping noise), a bucket of paint: Voila!

Then we get biographies up the gazzoo. Immediate media sensation. Interior decorators appear on the marquee. We get to see the human side of these assthetic assholes.

Cheap shots by the gallery? Perhaps. Judge not, lest ye be judged!

Because another has loved before does not mean that a new another cannot also love, without getting into sadism, and kinky sex. We can still love, as though new, and we can still be impressed by the human form (body, to you) as something beautiful, not to be cleverly distorted, or obscured (even though Madison Avenue [where they also peddle ‘art’], uses the human body, as a clothes rack, to promote the latest emaciated [anorexic] fad and fashion). Sheeeittt.

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Back in the 'studio' or 'garret', we are wont to persevere. We are individuals, not so much ones with something to say, but individuals, with a desire to say something, whether inspired through the great masters, or the starkness of reality, or the all consuming rapture felt at the sight of the youthful female figure, or other manifestations of beauty; all ours for the beholding, even, and forever, in this rotting civilization engineered by man, the reeking pestilence. Beauty must triumph, and uplift (lift us out of the muck, ordure, and mire, into which we seem to naturally gravitate.) The author argues, a goddamned piece of abstract 'art' will not do this, despite all the hoopla (art appreciationists) concerning 'the eyes of the beholder'; collectors be damned!

Perhaps the human body, after all, becomes ordinary, even soiled, once it has been seen and touched.

In that case, we need to maintain a monastic distance in order to preserve something, one hesitates to use, 'sacred', because of its many connotations, but the implication is clear; easily defined through its opposite, the 'profane'.

Meanwhile, in the studio, the muse demands the utmost. Art has been loosely described as 10 % inspiration, 90% perspiration. One seeks a kind of perfection, that is, a true expression of what one feels. The performer knows when he shirks. He knows what he (or she) intended. Perhaps what was intended is not attainable. What then? Perhaps one has overworked his creation too much; it has stiffened. What does one do? Start again? Molest what he has created; that is, knock it around, to somehow loosen it up, to get back to where one lost it, lost the thing he was trying to say, before it disappeared behind the curtain of inattention, sloppy workmanship, or persevering in the face of unmistakable failure? Will he rationalize, 'nobody will ever really know what was intended'. Or does one's personal integrity demand that he (or she) destroy the failure rather than struggle to make it into something better than it is? If one changes one thing, is he forced to change something else to make it consistent, ad infinitum? The painter Rouault is said to have destroyed the bad stuff.

It is the author's belief that most 'art' work is accidental, even with portraiture. It seems unavoidable, when the intent was perfection. That is, the aim was left unattained; second best will have to suffice. Perhaps the accident is better after all, than something or nothing, or what was intended. The author would guess, once you get past farty, this gets harder to do. However, one can develop his ability to recognize the happy accident. Preserved as a 'study' in futility.

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This calls to mind the eminent scientist proclaiming that zero is a meaningful result, further amplified by his wife who claimed that her spouse did not achieve his zero by accident, rather that he knew where the game was, he was in the right forest, and he had the weapons to deal with the critter he was seeking. When he fired at what he perceived to be the real thing, he brought down, instead, its second cousin, which turned out to be of more scientific interest than the real thing. The happy accident.

Lets hope that all surgeries that succeed are not just happy accidents.

To get to the point; there is a point, is there not?

Making the metal sculptures was not original with this arteest. His father was doing it. Julio Gonzalez was doing it. Saul Baizerman was doing it. Hell, even Picasso was doing it. There was Giacometti, Modigliani, Marini, and a truck load of lesser knowns, and unknowns, doing it (like they do it, monkey see, monkey do [even the arteest's first partner got into the act]), along with all the huge bronze casters like Maillol, Lipchitz, Epstein, Moore, plus all the monument practitioners. With a little mock-up, and a pair of proportional dividers, one can become Custom Borglum with dynamite and a jack hammer.

All in the name of ART (*who*).

The foregoing was intended to intimate that failure is the name of the game; and that one is lucky to get anything that resembles what was intended, and that the inspiration lasts only so long, before it is time to move on. What will have to do will have to do.

This author's rationales are relatively simple. Where he felt most lacking, in the area of anatomy, he was caught in the act of settling for, what anyone who can plainly see, were sketches in metal; novel rationalizations. Sometimes sketches are better than



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the real thing.

Earlier the author alluded to the problem of filling 3-D space with 360 degrees of acceptable visible illusion. This seemed relatively simple with the first of the two foregoing 'sketches'.

This was seemingly more difficult with the second 'sketch'. In the first, the skirt (in motion) is to be seen, and to tie together the whole through the 360 degrees; everything hinges on the hoop, but also, the gesturing figure is caught up in the turning of its body, both urging it on and maintaining its balance, and since it is an introspective contemplative dance, the figure is contained within itself. As you will doubtlessly observe, a picture is worth something proverbial in all of this.

The second of the two figures is a more difficult enterprise because there is no hoop, only the crossing and leading on of certain lines of an unlikely butterfly dress, that do not always resolve in the next quadrant, or sector of illusion. The subtleties of the sketch are found in the gesture of slim tentative legs.



The third, in this set of sketches, is an overworked thing that could not rely on swirling fabric. It was originally created with a hoop that was held by the two hands, through which she gazes in abstract thought. Without the support of garment, one is obliged to deal with the anatomy of the figure; it better be pretty damned good (the opposite of which is revealed in this figure), yet when revealed in only certain aspects it resolves sculpturally, as well as suggesting a pleasing female figure (if one views it only as a sketch).

The reader needs to be reminded the process involves the adding and the taking away freely and at random, and living with the 'happy accident'.

This process needs to be contrasted to the carving of wood and stone, which involves only taking away, where the opportunity for the happy accident is rare indeed. One might anoint a carving

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with the rationale 'sketch' rather than 'unfinished' as some are wont to say. The author recalls, in particular, Michelangelo's 'captives, which are referred as 'unfinished', but also can be regarded as 'sketches', and, if you want to extend the argument, as 'happy accidents'. They might be considered so because marvelously, they are satisfying as compositions, and they leave something for the imagination, which any finished work seldom does.

Art and Aesthetics (artistic and aesthetic endeavors) have proven to be one of the most gratifying experiences for the species. Both the maker (creator) and viewer (listener) share in the experience. The species expresses its noblest sentiments through the arts. Those who are privileged to be practicing artists are also targets for criticisms (judgments with regard to their efforts).

The author's personal experience was intense in this regard, not so much as a performer, but as an ear to the hard judgments of the pateras, with regard to other practitioners.

To fadder, there was one kind of art, intrinsically 'representational', or 'naturalistic'. The mud paint slingers, the found objecters (Campbell Soup canners), the visualists (what ever goes), (Warholists), the cacophonists, the forced endeavorers, abstractionists, dabblers in 'aesthetics', dada, doodoo, diddlers and doodlers, were all shirkers of discipline. And those who did not observe classical forms, classical motifs, were neglectors of the finest traditions. Yet fadder would mock those attempting to paint like Nickoloss Poussin, who had attempted to resurrect the ancient symbols as *modus operandi*. The fadder thought content was the most important element in a work of art; that visual aesthetics were secondary. Art was intended to enhance the subject (the content, Campbell Soup)? Commercial Artists!!? Lest we forget, there's money in ART.

Dad thought Pablo Picasso was more a performer than an artist. He thought Peter Paul Rubens was hung up on the flesh (the flesh dabbled with an unsubtle passion, not worthy subject in the arts (re: art and wimmen don't mix)).

Who indeed was the perfect artist? For technique, many thought Rembrandt Harmensz van Rign, Jan van der Meer van Delft, Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes were masters, along with Micheleangelo, Leonardo, Rodin, and a few others, some residing in darkest, most removed, antiquity (Praxiteles); of many different cultural backgrounds (and anonymous). One aspired to become like them; one was inspired by both their technical

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achievements, and their subject matter; and, surely, the aura. Imagine anonymity today, if you will.

But there were others, the impressionists (Claude Monet, Camille Pissaro) Edgar Degas, artists like Albert Ryder, Winslow Homer, James Whistler; Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Odilon Redon; who spoke to us of fine sentiments beyond the mere classical.

Names intentionally omitted? No. But perhaps it is clear to the reader that certain prejudices are being revealed; the influence of the fadder over the author, as well.

However it appears, and however it sounds, the intent is not far from the words.

The author considers himself open to the honest practitioner, whether he be a primitive, or the most accomplished classicist and technician. Does everyone one have something to say?

One thing that the author remembers hearing from the psychiatrist friend of the fadder; paraphrasing: its alright to like something, or not like something; that is sufficient basis for judging art.

That goes to say, all the malarkey and hoopla that goes into yea saying something (art appreciation) may not convince the viewer or listener that what he is seeing or hearing is something he should, or even can, like.

One need not feel ignorant, or that he is not getting the message. If you do not like it, you do not like it; conversely, if you like it, you like it. Supposedly we are discussing art. If the sole criteria for judging art is whether one likes it or not, where does that leave this high-minded activity?

One has his likes and dislikes, perhaps his prejudices influencing each.

One might ask, 'Does it move you?'

Do you like Rembrandt? What's there not to like?

Do you like Calendar Art? Is that Art? Suppose one is comparing Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres' famous Odalisque to a frilly sensuous image he sees on the shop calendar, can he appreciate both equally, though engendering different emotions?

To some, Norman Rockwell and Andrew Wyeth are the epitome with their drawing skills, to others, trompe d'oeil, or Salvador Dali. And still others, William Harnett and John F. Peto, or Walt Stevens.

After bombarding the reader with all this art appreciation mumbo jumbo, what is it the author truly believes? Likes and dislikes, prejudices aside, can the author objectively state what is art? Obviously No; even as a practitioner. The author's tendency is to appreciate certain skills; ones he has not mastered; or has

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not cared enough to master. Every other practitioner seems to possess skills different than one's own; perhaps making those individuals unique, even if their methods, and what they are attempting to portray, seem meaningless to the author. Perhaps some of the marquee ones suffer with this oblique judgment.

It is obvious the author is barely influenced by the 'art appreciation' rhetoric. If the author was to choose between the Modigliani nude and the Goya nude, he would probably choose the Modigliani. If he was to choose between an 'antique' Greek nude and a nude by August Rodin, the choice becomes more difficult; one of each perhaps. If the choice was between a Michelangelo nude and a Rodin nude, or a Greek nude and a Michelangelo nude, the Rodin and the Greek would be preferred. If the author was to choose between a Michelangelo drawing and a Rodin drawing, perhaps the Michelangelo would be preferred. Greek drawings seem non-existent. These are personal preferences, and would be based on possession. From a purely sculptural standpoint, the Michelangelo unfinished marbles would rate very highly, above most other's finished works. The author prefers Leonardo drawings to Durer drawings. Why? Perhaps the aesthetic is more pleasing. Goya's drawings and etchings are virtually matchless, as well as the message they contain, their aesthetic was intended to be secondary. The aesthetic of Vermeer seemed primary; but as well, a pervading tranquility. In most instances this leaves someone like Jackson Pollock out of the running. Pablo Picasso is often left out of the running, in terms of personal preferences; if forced to choose, he would choose the 'Rose' period, with the somnambulists. Picasso seemed obviously (if one can put these two words together) personally affected by the bombing of Guernica, to the extent that he became involved with the message; or a message.

How important is the message? What is the message in Aphrodite, or Venus? As carried forth (passing the torch?) by Botticelli? Or Cranach? Or Velasquez? Ingres kept Venus alive with a more sensuous rendition; whereas the early Greeks in the Skopas or Kallimachos, in Hellenistic times startle us with a fine aesthetic combined with grace and beauty. Archaic Greek figurines enjoy a singular place in the annals of sculpture with their use of drapery. Rare is the Egyptian nude; sunburn!

The author realizes he is making too many declarations beyond the scope of his harangue (and perhaps his intelligence). If beauty is the object, it is often declared such is in the 'eyes of the beholder'. The author encourages the reader to 'Behold!'

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When the author, in building two sections of his log house separately, intending they should be joined as the building grew, discovered a discrepancy between the heights of the two sections. In order for the log sections to be joined in a notch, they had to meet at the same level. It was not going to happen. To remedy the situation, a 'cheater' log was required, much like, in wooden boat construction, using planks, when, at some point, the bends in the planks became too severe, it became necessary to install 'cheater' planks, usually above the water line. Anyway, the discrepancy was obvious because the diameter of the cheater log was significantly different than the other logs used in the structure. When the discrepancy was revealed to the log house builder who had encouraged the author to build with logs; he advised hanging the moose head over the offending log. The author didn't have a moose head. (More about this later).

John D. Rockefeller should have hung a moose head over Diego Rivera's Lenin/Trotsky. Art Appreciation is a sometime thing, often misquoted. John D. was indifferent to the worker. The worker's politics were a threat to him.

What is the most perfect piece of sculpture? Or any of the visual arts; what is the best of the best? Ah Ha. Most of what the author knows about works of sculpture, and the other visual arts has been revealed through photographs. He has seen the works on display at the Modern Museum and the Metropolitan Museum. He has seen the works on display at the Mary Hill Museum, and the Palisades (Rodin) Museum in San Francisco. He has not seen any of the wood carvings of Ernst Barlach; only photographs preserve some of his work that was destroyed (confiscated) by the Nazis. He has been impressed by Julio Gonzalez' Montserrat. He has been impressed by the marbles and the portraiture of August Rodin. He had seen the portraiture of Jacob Epstein in photograph before he had seen his actual work at the Modern Museum. To the author, the scale was all wrong - too small - to whom any portrait assumes a monumental scale (larger than life). Not as big as a Mt. Rushmore, but larger than life. From the very beginning his scale was always slightly larger than life, perhaps $1 \frac{1}{5}$ to $1 \frac{1}{3}$ larger (he cannot recall now, but perhaps the cigarette lighter was larger than life).

He has not seen the 12 foot tall marble David, only in photograph, maybe a 5" x 7". How is one to evaluate such a creation? (If David is 12 feet tall, how tall, Goliath?) He has seen Egyptian sculpture at the Met, and castings and chards of the Greeks. Again, photographs prove the better part of the bargain for the Egyptians and the Greeks. Because the photographer has

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tried to find the very best view to photograph, using the most dramatic lighting?

Pontification: Basic attitudes that apply to life also apply to arting. One can do a good job or he can do a bad job. A good job consists of doing what one intended (the 10 %), not avoiding the labors (the 90 %) necessary to the task. A bad job consists of not doing what one intended, mostly because of the avoiding of the effort required. Mixed into this equation is a notion of 'integrity'. The pateras carved this word in large letters on the kitchen table (one did not inquire what was meant by it [it did not redeem him in the author's eyes]).

Let us suppose one has put out his very best effort, achieving a 'satisfactory' result on day one. Several hours, days, months, years later, one notes the shortcomings; the good effort seems to have fallen short, becoming an embarrassment (the portrait of Merriam serves as example). This is also very true of robbing.

What is one to do?

The author recalls one particular wood carving of his, not an especially good effort, in terms of its sculptural qualities; a bothersome piece that, to this day, falls short of something. Initially, a standing figure engaged in a certain action, seemed poorly articulated; in other words it did not work; the figure may have suffered some deformity at birth. Also the face on the figure seemed too large, out of proportion to an idealized scale.

The author cannot recall exactly which he addressed first. The carving was essentially finished except for these bothersome details. With a jig saw, he removed the face, carving another to replace it, by gluing in the replacement. That's cheating! It's a violation of some kind of purist ethic. As it turned out the replacement face still seems too oversized. However at the time of the replacement, it seemed the proper scale. The problem with the articulation required an equally drastic solution. Below the hemline, one leg was amputated, and the base, which was part of the carving, needed to be severed so the amputated leg attached to it could be manipulated (tried in different positions in order to achieve better articulation). Once this was done, the base with the leg attached, needed to be fit to the main body of the carving, that is, the remainder of the carving with the other part (half) of the base. This required much time filing and sanding to match the two pieces of the base with the leg properly articulated. Still the piece lacks something it requires to satisfy the arteest; the face is still too large, and the leg articulation fails in some mysterious way. Fortunately, not all carved pieces suffered with this kind of problem. However, each piece, whether carved or

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assembled, lacks something that could be corrected in some way. Changing one thing often requires the changing of something else. If one says to himself, 'better luck next time', is he affecting in some harmful way, his integrity? In the robbing game one has the computer program (in this case, WORD 2010) to create, destroy, create, destroy, ad infinitum.

The author had the singular privilege, or was it duty, to mention to his spouse that her weaving was beginning to go awry. Her sense of integrity was so keen that she could not allow 'better luck next time' to interfere with what was necessary. She would 'tear out' that portion that offended. It was not possible to make something perfect, in any case. If one studies all hand-made weavings closely, he will note 'flaws' of one kind or another.

Is it sufficient to say, achieving perfection seems impossible. Even the great one doesn't make any two alike, and each model when studied closely, lacks some basic symmetry.

While this writing is intended to address a certain time period in the arteest's life, it needs to be emphasized, if it is not already apparent, that 'creativity' per se, was not reserved only for the visual arts.

The author was trapped, no matter what, by the pervasive inevitable. Not by a muse, but some oddity springing from abuse.

Abandoning sculpture for the presence of the female seemed easy enough. But, it didn't end there. The disease relapsed. The flaunt to his ego by the pateras was a deep deep wound that would not heal, and would not go away with the balm of Her presence, and persisted, even after the pateras was sent packing.

When he was in the military, he was given a series of tests in order to determine for what he would be most suitable, if suitable for anything. In order to apply for certain schooling, his scores in the tests were below that required for the subject which he chose to study. But he persevered, faltering in his effort, but after the intervention of a head doctor, returned to try again.

When he was in high school, he missed the first six weeks of his sophomore year because of a possible illness for which bed rest was advised. In his freshman year, to please daddy, he had taken Latin I. Latin II was designed to follow Latin I. Missing the first six weeks meant that Latin might as well have been Greek for all his understanding of what was happening. He was not a good student in any case, more concerned about Marie Scalli than scholastic achievement. He flunked Latin II. But, as Junior he returned to the fray to gain a better



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understanding of what Vercingetorix had to endure as a captive of Julius Caesar.

This was also true of his Military experience where his head failed to comprehend something at first, given the second chance, things became clearer.

This little aside is intended to 'lay the groundwork' for what follows. In the State of New York, it was a universal requirement by the Regents that each student must study 'English' for each of his or her four years in high school.

The author thought English, per se, very boring. Each year, a novel was assigned as study material. *Ivanhoe*, *Silas Marner*, *House Of Seven Gables*, *Tale Of Two Cities*, as well as American and English poets, the *Rape Of Lucrece*, most notable for the author's complete lack of understanding of the message, and the iconic William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar*. Although he liked the English teacher who had assigned the *Rape Of Lucrece*, his head proved obdurate and impenetrable. It was later, liking the next English teacher even more, and since he already heard of Julius, in Latin Class, he made a greater effort to pry open the synapses. He was to learn about back-stabbing politics, even though Political Science was not included in the curriculum. 'Friends, Romans, countrymen'; sounds like 'Mah fellah Americuns'. Mark Antony and W? What would Will have done with W? Doubtlessly, of the highest inconsequentiality.

All those knights running around in *Ivanhoe* was kind of fun, but it wasn't until he saw Elizabeth Taylor as Rebecca, after leaving school, that he got the message. Then, there was Marlon Brando, Louis Calhern and James Mason. Also after leaving school, later in life, he read other authors whom he felt should have been included in the curriculum, even though considered by the regents, not fit for young minds,

What the author is trying to portray in this aside deals with his choice of avenues for self-expression. He had already proven to himself his clear lacks in English (mostly, lack of interest, still true to this day), which were verified in his college English Comp. Class, where his first effort upon a subject worthy of his great intellect, earned him an F. What was he imagining when he resorted to words, not ughs, or Latin or French (studied for three years in high school), but English words, as an avenue of self-expression? Obdurate, to say the least. He persists.

While the psychiatrist friend of pateras encouraged his foray into literature, his efforts were obviously pretentious, fatheaded, grandiose. Geeeezzuz, and how! Still? Can he not see the 'handwriting' on the wall? He persists. Is he, at least, doing better? One's conceits obscure the truth.

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To return to cases, the Young Artist moved along. His was a serious undertaking, fraught with peril. The only way to avoid the worst of the perils was to produce something that, at least, gave some satisfaction; the endeavor had to be worth the effort.

At the time of any 'creative' effort, the work, speaking of sculpture now, was always too close at hand, the critical eye knowingly viewing something that was only partially intended. It is only with hindsight, when one can do nothing to remedy what the eye perceives as lacking, that one allows the thing to live, when perhaps it should be destroyed. It might be said from this that one eventually learns the truth of things. It is a trail that one must follow in order to understand what life may be all about.

Looking back, he recognizes some things that are better than he imagined, whether intended or not. The things, in themselves, are unique; one of a kind. Could he have been the only one to have produced such and such? Does it have to be that unique? In this day and age, everything can be copied in great detail; so, does it really matter? Does one want to be so unique that it would be obvious should it be copied? Perhaps.

It seems, with the more ambitious works, the shortcomings seem more glaring, and with the less ambitious works, one might feel more comfortable.

Yes, it is all past. The reader is encouraged to persist in his or her creative efforts, but at the same time, leave some time to enjoy life; and to somehow impart that enjoyment to his work.

How is one to truly measure the success of any work of art. So much falls by the wayside during our trials and tribulations. The author is mindful of the waste incurred during wartime. Nowadays the waste can be total; not even recognizable shards will remain. All effort, like life itself, swept away. Would that one would always save the Romes, Pragues, and Paris'. But the new breed of cat would consider it a challenge to knock over the infidel. Why bother in the face of such uncertainty?

He persists. The metal will melt, the wood will burn, the stone, rendered. Caput!

A stolen wood carving might survive in some vault, if it has not already been destroyed to conceal the fact that is/was stolen. Sheeit! Adolf rendered Ernst. In earnest. Sumbitch!

Georgie Porgie didn't give s—t about Iraq's museums and national treasures.

The author once shot a stump with a 12 gauge, imagining the stump to be bear; the purpose for which he had possession of the gun. It was obvious he knew little about guns. The shotgun had a choke attached to the end of its barrel which was liberated with

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gusto, and never found again, when a slug was discharged through it. Imagine the bear's surprise!

Adolf shot himself in the head over the remorse he felt for having done in Ernst. Georgie Porgie is still at large.

One does wonder sometimes how humanity has made it this far. The real test is to come.

The author has not completely abandoned the reader. The asides may not seem relevant, but truly, they are. Jackson Pollack may not seem to give a s—t about life and the living, with his swirlies; perhaps he didn't. Does 'art' require that one be interested in life? Can it not just be expression for its own sake? A drunken egotistical outburst, for example; who would know? Why identify an object when all objects leave one cold and indifferent. In the visual arts, if one cannot 'draw' an object the way he or she wishes, is that any cause to not draw, or is it cause to draw something that no one will recognize, or to present one with Rorschach imagery?

When the author looks at a Cezanne nude, boy!, he'll tell yuh!



Cezanne's apples are better, but his painterly technique is applied to the canvas as a whole, not to individual objects. The nude is irrelevant, as is the apple. However it still



remains important for him to paint something recognizable.



Rubens, Fragonard, Watteau, Ingres, Renoir, Maillol, Modigliani, even Goya, really got with it, a nude was a nude was a nude. Is a Cranach, Van Eyke, or Durer nude better than a Cezanne nude? What is meant by better; prettier, or more accurately drawn? The Cezanne nude is not intended to be an object; it is intended to be something recognizable in an overall painted surface, it is not part of a series of objects placed



in space, but on a canvas as representational 'unnaturalism'?. By

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heaping these names all in the same paragraph, is one suggesting something about aesthetics, good drawing/bad drawing, personal preferences, or something beyond each of these?

Who drew, painted, or sculpted the sexiest broad? Was the objective of the arteest to draw, paint, or sculpt the sexiest broad? How sexy was Galatea intended to be? Often it is said of abstract art: Geeeeezz! If one compares any abstraction to the real thing, is the real thing better by definition? The Jew was purported to have asked the Spaniard: 'How do you make love to a cube?' Suppose it is recognizable, but all distorted, elongated, skewed, warped, hunchbacked, scoliosed, would it be better to have made it completely unrecognizable? Well, hapless reader, anything goes, and if it travels in the right circles, it begins to take on an aura of its own, whether it stacks up against the greatest practitioners or not. When one has the means, he or she collects, or deals in collectables, the more original and distinct, the 'better'. In the old days, the practitioners were a select few. The select few have acquired antiquarian status; a mystique value, other value as well, has been assigned the 'better' to them. Nowadays, nearly everybody is getting into the act.



The question, who drew, painted or sculpted the sexiest 'broad'? As already mentioned, Venus de Milo seems chunky by today's standards of feminine sleekness. August comes pretty close to producing the most



sensuous line, and more akin to our notion of femininity; is that what is meant by sexy? What is meant by Art?

Sensuousness and sexiness may not be the same thing. As fluid, flowing, and lyrical as might seem Botticelli, his female proportions, when studied closely, seem unlike anything produced by ordinary means. Perhaps a classical pose suggesting the original Venus de Milo is intended, however, with sloping fleshy shoulders, a thick left arm, thick thighs, pudgy ankles and feet. Is that to say one cannot imagine getting it on with his subjects? But imagine the sensuousness of that red



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hair. Is that like Jackson Pollock saying, 'put a sack over it'? Don't look!

Was Fragonard really trying to be sexy? How about Goya with *Maja Denuda*? Did Francisco imagine her that way, or did he



actually see her that way, and is she not anatomically exaggerated? A lot of speculation has been conjectured regarding overlays, and superimpositions. She (Cayetana) might have been very difficult to resist, or to say it another way, her expectations might have been very difficult to resist if she really bared all. Was he excited by what he had painted in the clothed version; and was this painting from real life, carried one step further? Did he really wonder what was underneath? This to say nothing demeaning, or diminishing, regarding Goya. He is one of the author's heroes. One might wonder, who is Fragonard?

Was Modigliani attempting to depict sexy? The author's personal opinion is, No. Unlike Cezanne, was he painting, more of an object, than a whole canvas? Was he being more evocative than provocative? *Tall Nude Lying*, is certainly very sensuous,



somewhere close to provocative. Modigliani is depicting his love of the person, and the love of her form. Because he was a painter, he receives a different consideration than one who would photograph the same person today. Her

elongated form is as unreal as Botticelli's nudes. A photograph of such a body today, or at any time, would depict an anomalous female form, if it was real. Anomalous may not be considered sexy.

It has previously been mentioned, in the 'muscleature' of some Greek and Egyptian sculpture, the mammaries stand tall against gravity. Is this an aesthetic consideration? The author believes so. The ophthalmologist will ask, 'Is it more sexy, or less sexy?'

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One of the things we need to recognize; it is men or women who are the creators, not Gods. To ask that an arteest behave like a God, whatever that could mean, is to expect too much of the human clay. It is the author's opinion, considering the state of the world (planet earth with its earthlings) is in a sorry state, which means to the author, that the 'omnipotent creator' is always getting sidetracked chasing after some hussy (or hunk), instead of looking after his (her) creation (which, by the way, needs a lot of looking after). Does this mean that arteests are at liberty to prostitute their art? That sounds amusingly ambiguous.

Amongst the higher caliber arteests, sexy is placed under control. Aesthetics seems to claim the higher priority. One's organs and viscera are transformed into sensuous lines and shapes (sublimated).

Does any of this bear upon the arteest now under consideration? The author believes this arteest was imbued with some kind of aesthetic notion, however he might otherwise view the subject. He believes there is more 'poetry' in suggesting 'beauty' than in actually prominently displaying the parts that are assumed to be beautiful. 'In the eyes of the beholder'; is that what applies? That is not to say, you either got it or you don't. Each person handles the subject in his or her own way.

One of the nicest contemporary, colorful (cheerie,) drawings/paintings the author has seen, might be classified as calendar art, although the calendar was perhaps the farthest away thing in the artist's mind. A pretty lady is hanging out her laundry on a breezy day; the laundry is fluttering, and her hair and dress are also fluttering. Simple, or simple minded? Keeping it simple might be the trick. Francois Millet kept it simple. Is the Sower, the Sweeper, the Shepherdess, the Goose Girl, to be considered 'calendar' art?

Whoa! Let's stop for a minute to consider what is being written. Calendar Art?! Is there such a thing, if we approached it from a different angle, from the angle of a calendar? Many calendars are illustrated with 'famous painters'; Renaissance painters, Goya, Klimt, Degas, Monet, most likely, Millet; probably even Pollock. Norman Rockwell appeared on many American calendars, probably because he depicted the American Way as a dreamy idyllic way. He was a true believer who hung optimistically in every kitchen. How does he rate in the upper echelons of the grand art world? His stuff still sells; all the collectors want some.

Do the collectors set some kind of standard? Acquisition of 'art' as furniture (avoiding high taxes on things of high monetary value [an art invented by CPAs]).

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Reality is regarded as an incomplete art in itself (does that make any sense?). It is often the photograph is altered in Adobe Photoshop, to reveal some kind of different, or subjectively improved, reality. This author has been most deliberate in photographing, however selectively, as many views as possible in order to demonstrate the possibilities, or impossibilities, of three dimensionality being a satisfying experience, in a 360 degree examination. Adobe is being used to process each view. Process, in this case, means eliminating the background, a very tedious and time-consuming procedure. Imagine the labors of presenting each of the 360 degrees. In one single case, he thought the object so unsatisfying as a depiction, that he deliberately warped it in all views.

The first (carved in yew) is the original; the second, a distortion of the first. The others, different views of warp. Only somewhat interesting; no!? The power of the imaging programs is beyond our imaginings. Imagine these warps as actual carvings. As one might conjecture, more animated! The author believes the reader can readily see what can be suggested by submitting any photograph to Adobe's transformative power, and how this might influence the practitioner.



It is the author's opinion that every work of art (sculpture, let's say) can be displayed to its advantage, in alcoves, for example, where nothing will distract from its aura; with controlled lighting, even lighting that changes periodically, perhaps situated on a slow-rotating motorized pedestal. Give it a central place. If one gives a dining table, a couch, a bed, a hutch, a clock, a special place, why not, the more

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unique ‘thing’? We are speaking of ‘visual’ art, are we not? Perhaps even a crappy work of art could benefit from such exposure. Looking at something too long, situated in one place, inures one. The author finds this to be true living by the sea. It is really only when there are storms, which generate wind, wave, tossing limbs, (sea change) that one notices, and is fascinated. In the author’s line of sight will exist both a piece of sculpture and the sea, often only a blur; unnoticed. Dah!

When people come to the author’s home for the first time they tend to notice the surroundings, and the building, then perhaps a piece of sculpture, usually the same one. It is the largeness of it and the space it consumes. The author says to himself, if only I had another one, one of the better ones, the same size, it too would get noticed; it is a better piece; so on and so forth.

The reader will see in the illustrations that all pieces appear to be the same size. On paper, they are. Its like David and the picture of David. At twelve feet, in real life, David would probably be bigger than Goliath.

Break.

While doing metal sculpture, the arteest did begin to work on refinements to his technique. He was trying to integrate the line of the cut metal (or the welded seam) to blend with the mouth, the eye, the nose. Also, his hands were more carefully modeled. But there was something not satisfying working with metal. In one way, it was a freeing medium in that one could both add and subtract. One could quickly suggest something.

Why did wood become more satisfying, even though it was more difficult to only subtract. Even with wood, wood that was lacking enough material, more was added. This not to mention the flaws found in individual blocks of wood (cracks, knots, and sundry blemishes). In some places it is obvious; in others, not so. Although wood was not really ‘plastic’, the author, found through the use of clothing, hair, even non-figurative elements, he could suggest motion (lead the eye away from a stasis).



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The previously mentioned stolen piece (arbutus) was a transitional work, in transition from more static, careful carving, to something more venturesome. It was also more sensuous, using the carving tools to create the sensuousness, that is, rounded forms, using an inverted cutting edge. It also used non-



figurative elements (not clothing) to freely shape the sensuous space around the figure. The face is buried in this element. This could have been warped in Adobe. (By the way, the author wants to reiterate most strongly that this work belongs to the author and his family. If it is still out there in the world [if not confiscated or destroyed by burning or concealment], it belongs to the author and the author's family; no one else. It is a stolen art work; it has been missing for 45 years. It was removed from the author's desk at his workplace at the Institute Of Molecular Biology at the University of Oregon. The author would very much like to have the work restored to him before he is obliged to leave the planet. If that is not the case, the work will still belong to his family, and no one else.)

It would be only too easy for the author to heap his cynical wrath on the human race. Something basic has been violated in this particular act of theft; it strikes at the heart of something not expressible or definable. The author was not flattered by the act. The police, who were notified, shrug their shoulders; even more cause for cynicism. Run a caution light and see where that gets you. Easy pickings.

The author is not inclined to apologize for this latest foray.

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The author believes this is an appropriate place to insert another aside; a homage to Ernst Barlach.



Fig 10



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Ernst died, a broken man, at age 68, in Nazi Germany.



Ernst Barlach in the year of his death (1938)

Obviously, it will be difficult to continue (Just added; *weinende frau* ~30 inches) to the right, \$938,500.00

!!!!???, [not too shabby for 'degenerate art'] a latter day consolation prize at Christie's; [there's still hope]. The author can only be himself, with all of his permutations, and asides. Like Ernst, he declaims against the war-mongering of his fatherland; he declaims against the Patriot Act, which is designed to circumvent the Constitution of The United States Of America. He believes the ex-



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president of his Vaterland, George W. Bush, was/is an abomination, little different than his declared enemies, and little different than Adolf. He believes he should be brought to justice as was the ex-president of Chile (Pinochet) for crimes against humanity (unless, of course, he would like to shoot himself, as did his forerunner, Adolf). Alternatively, he needs to be hunted down, as was Osama.

The author must apologize for his outburst while observing the abominable fate of Ernst. There is no vindication; there is no reward; there is only the eternal silence. It is us who follow and breath that must make amends; else there is no salvation.

The author seeks mitigation of those feelings he engenders in others when he speaks, as he does, against those abominable ones, who had dominated his life for too long, without recourse, or remorse.

The author must return to his assigned task. He does not wish to die a broken man.

But perhaps he is already having to live in the shadows, both, of his father, and the unknowns, who have kept him on the dark side of things. His was not to best his pater, but to find himself.

Pater found himself when his thingie got caught in the wringer. She (it was a she) (Angela, not his mother) was a juicy morsel to quench anybody's thirst. The indulgent doc said it was like taking candy from a baby. An indulgent doc is different than an admonishing doc. I can't fathom the analogy, since taking candy from a baby seems particularly odious. Perhaps screwing somebody else's buxom thingie was too much like candy. Anyway daddy was heavily compromised by the pudenda, interfering with the asceticism required for his muse.

He had gotten into the thingie thing through the ARTS. ART is always drawing people together. ART is where its at. Whose art didn't seem to matter; it was always an occasion. What happens as a result may have nothing at all to do with art, per se, other than 'grist for the mill'. He had thought Angela's husband's work was Calendar stuff. Why then, any further association.

Pateras was an opportunist when it came to the female; married or not. Dad had 'empathized' with the beautiful damsel when he imagined her severely crippled husband (by polio) making love to her. Lurid or lewd, in his studio he depicted a skeleton fornicating with the luscious lady. Daddy didn't confine his empathy to his studio. He made his commiseration moves as proved human in the situation, hence his compromised thingie. As it developed, she wanted what she was getting, and more. She wanted a relationship that went beyond the bed. The turgid moments left a residue of guilt over abandoning others in the

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lurch. Tarnished self-images. She probably felt used. Daddy's concern (waning empathy) was evaporating rapidly in the complications of living a secret life and cheating. He had little compassion for the skeleton. Besides the painting of the ravages of bones, the artist in him attempted a busty portrait (from the waist up) of his paramour. Oddly and strangely enough, his preparatory drawings of the face, in profile, resembled his own spouse (the author's mother). Photos of the bust reveal a busty (pointy) creature with an elevated chin, perhaps pondering the raptures of the beyond. Its one of those thingies one does with the grist. Art is not all it seems; inspiration is sometimes ill-gotten, and the product ill-conceived grist. That's how one finds himself; does that make any sense? Recall that 'failure' is the mark of man.

The author seems trapped in his asides; so little does he have to report of himself. He too fails in his purpose, other purposes surfacing to cloud the issue, so little does he have to report.

One's self!? If the real truth became known, none of us would pass muster. The author's mother might. His spouse might. His daughter might. ?????????????? He believes daddy sometimes made up things. In his telling of tales, the author believes his pater's real objective, at the time, was to bed the author's first partner. Even as unhappy as was his first partner, she passed muster. The author was also unhappy, and like father, like son, he didn't pass muster. There was a difference, the son was not predatory. He simply found happiness with another. But Moses would strike him down as an infidel, involved with someone else's chattel. The author must suffer with his own appraisals. At least two other people were hurt by his wanderings.

In the author's country, if one out of two marriages fail, that seems like a lot of unhappiness; or to put it another way, it seems like a lot of searching for happiness. In all walks of life. Also in many other countries; a planetary condition? Russia, which wants to outdo the US, claims a higher percentage of failed marriages.

The author recalls the police officer, who admonished one of his wife's clients, to 'keep his hands out of the cookie jar'.

His own wife's parents celebrated 70 years of togetherness, while their two sons took their own lives, and while their two daughters marriages ended in divorce, and wherein one daughter's four offspring's marriages and relationships all failed, and the step children of the other's (the author's children from the previous partnership), failed.

The Moses edicts, in reality, don't work. From Mount Sinai 'Keep you hand out of the cookie jar.' Written on the wind.

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What else might have the Omnipotent prescribed from his lofty post in the ether, as an alternative to, 'Don't'?

As the judge proclaimed in the courtroom: *Honi soit qui mal y pense*. In Pig Latin it means 'one man's meat is another man's poison'. The other guy (the great butt-fucking poet) from the underside of Mt. Sinai walked free.

In the courtroom 'morality' was considered irrelevant. Was it obscene; did it seek to elicit prurient thoughts? Butt fucking is not obscene; just distasteful. Use a condom.

One is mindful of John Gardner's questions regarding the responsibility of authors.

As a 'young artist', one must navigate such treacherous waters in order to get to the other side.

This author, despite all his antics, will not Howl in the Tropics. Some things get into print in a free society, while others do not. 'Will it sell?' becomes the criteria? Will 'art' sell? We suspect, whether prurient, or just clean fun, that 'sex' will sell. Sigmund has us pegged at three as fondly exploring our genitals. The nurse was overheard to say of the 3 year old 'he is playing with his wire'. Hear no evil, see no evil. Consider the foregoing 'poetry'.

Is the author not expressing himself?

At our very inception we are exhorted to be good. We find it very difficult to be good.

We are each one of us conceited. One's conceits warp his humanity.

The author has attempted to mock the Young Artist as someone full of promise. The author has attempted to mock the over-forty artist as someone past his prime. The author has attempted to mock the very idea of Art as a high-minded pastime.

The author's father shamed his offspring into trying to become something they were not. He succeeded in in screwing up their lives, and their offspring's lives. It will take time for the lineage to resume some kind of normalcy, provided the species doesn't self-destruct. The author will admit that, through circumstance and exposure, even he could see the value of art.

John Gardener put forth the notion that the artist should possess and/or utilize a high moral sense 'true art is by its nature moral'. Ideally, art could enslave itself to the message, presumably moral in nature.

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Whether fortunate or not, the world is what it is, morality a sometime thing. Sigmund believed there was not an 'instinct to morality'; that is, we were not born with a moral sense.

Moses attempted to prescribe Law with limited success.

A Law unto himself, W. proposed there ought to be a limit to freedom.

The raw animal is imbued with few subtleties, often achieved through cynicism. The raw animal invites rebuke, often incarceration, sometimes full retribution.

'Civilized violence' is an intriguing idea that, in this instance, is garnered from an Indian word, 'Naqoyqatsi'. A question arises, How do we define, 'civilized'? As Herman inquired, "Is civilization a thing distinct, or merely an advanced stage of barbarism?"

We seem to need to provide answers regarding what we have done, what we are doing, and what we propose to do. Art seems a remote possibility in this scheme of things; at least irrelevant.

How come John Gardner never wrote The Great American Novel? It goes to show ya, it's a lot easier said than done.

Sometimes being an artist requires that you borrow, sometimes plagiarize, or outright steal (rob, as in 'robber'), from your fellow man (or woman) their travail, in order for you to win the Pullitzer (pulltitzer) Prize, and eventually succumb to the Noball Prize, as did Mr Beckstein with Gripes of Wrath. Hats off to Sonora Babb.

Can more be said? Since pictures speak louder, let the show begin. Go Daddy will do the rest.